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REMINISCENCES

OF AN INTERCOURSE WITH

GEORGE BERTHOLD NIEBUHR,

THE HISTORIAN OF ROME.

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BY

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TO MRS. AUSTIN, OF LONDON.

My dear Madam,

The contents of this small volume were gathered in Italy, and put together, to form a book, in America. In sending the manuscript across the Atlantic, I feel as if I should not allow it to appear in your country as an unbefriended stranger: and if I desire any friend in England for my book, whose good favours could I be more anxious to obtain than yours, Madam? You have become the interpreter of German literature to the English nation and their brethren in the Western hemisphere; and

you revere with me the name of that man to whose memory the following pages are dedicated. Nor can I forget that I had the great good fortune of being instrumental in making you acquainted with him.

Receive then, my dear Madam, this little work with kindness. A better mark of my remembrance it was not in my power to send you: I could not have graced with your name any pages dearer to me,—though painfully dear, I own. When I again looked over my journals kept in Rome, in order to collect the contents of these pages — those leaves written in the greatest of cities, and under the roof of my best friend, now perused in distant America, he dead and I an exile! — I felt as if I walked through an Italian garden, charming indeed, with perfuming flowers, and lovely alleys and fountains, with the luxuriant trees of the South

in blossom — the fragrant orange and the glowing pomegranate, and with vistas, far and wide, to the distant deep blue mountains; but I felt, too, as if I walked alone in it: with all these joyous colours of bright spring around me, and the cloudless azure vault above, I felt the grief of loneliness, and every spot reminded me of him, and what I owe to him. How continually does human life force upon our minds Goëthe's lines of painful truth —

"Ihr naht euch wieder, schwankende Gestalten!" &c.

I feel assured that you will overlook any deficiencies of my own, on account of the interest which the main subject of this volume will have for you. I beg you, Madam, to accept the sentiments of my great respect; and I know I do not venture too much if I seize upon this opportunity to express to you, in the name of

my adopted country, the sincerest thanks for your successful labours in that great exchange of knowledge and literature among nations, which teaches them mutual regard, and peace, and good-will. I am,

My dear Madam,

Your very obedient and humble servant,

FRANCIS LIEBER.

PHILADELPHIA, MAY 1835.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

BERTHOLD GEORGE NIEBUHR, the celebrated historian of Rome, was the son of Carsten Niebuhr. He was born in Copenhagen, August 27, 1776; but, before he had reached his second year, his father (a German) received an appointment in Germany, in South Ditmarsh, whither he took his son. The following account of his early education is derived from his biography of his father.

"He taught me English and French—better, at any rate, than they would have been taught by anybody else in such a place; and something of mathematics, in which he would have

proceeded much farther, had not want of zeal and desire in me unfortunately destroyed all his pleasure in the occupation. One thing indeed was characteristic of his whole system of teaching: — as he had no idea how anybody could have knowledge of any kind placed before him, and not seize it with the greatest delight and avidity, and hold to it with the steadiest perseverance, he became disinclined to teach whenever I appeared inattentive or reluctant to learn. As the first instructions I received in Latin, before I had the good fortune to become a scholar of the learned and excellent Jäger, were very defective, he helped me, and read with me Cæsar's Commentaries. Here, again, the peculiar bent of his mind showed itself;—he always called my attention much more strongly to the geography than the history. The map of ancient Gaul by D'Anville, for whom he had the greatest reverence, always lay before us. I was obliged to look out every place as it occurred, and to tell its exact situation. His

instructions had no pretension to be grammatical;—his knowledge of the language, so far as it went, was gained entirely by reading, and by looking at it as a whole. He was of opinion, that a man did not deserve to learn what he had not principally worked out for himself; and that a teacher should be only a helper to assist the pupil out of otherwise inexplicable difficulties. From these causes his attempts to teach me Arabic, when he had already lost that facility in speaking it without which it is impossible to dispense with grammatical instruction, to his disappointment and my shame, did not succeed. When I afterwards taught it myself, and sent him translations from it, he was greatly delighted.

"I have the most lively recollection of many descriptions of the structure of the universe, and accounts of eastern countries, which he used to tell me, instead of fairy tales, when he took me on his knee before I went to bed. The history of Mohammed; of the first caliphs,

particularly Omar and Ali, for whom he had the deepest veneration—of the conquests and spread of Islamism—of the virtues of the heroes of the new faith, and of the Turkish converts, were imprinted on my childish imagination in the liveliest colours. Historical works on these same subjects were nearly the first books that fell into my hands.

"I recollect, too, that on the Christmas-eve of my tenth year, by way of making the day one of peculiar solemnity and rejoicing to me, he went to a beautiful chest containing his manuscripts, which was regarded by us children, and indeed by the whole household, as a sort of ark of the covenant; took out the papers relating to Africa, and read to me from them. He had taught me to draw maps, and, with his encouragement and assistance, I soon produced maps of Habbesh and Sudan.

"I could not make him a more welcome birthday present than a sketch of the geography of eastern countries, or translations from voy-

ages and travels, executed as might be expected from a child. He had originally no stronger desire than that I might be his successor as a traveller in the East. But the influence of a very tender and anxious mother upon my physical training and constitution thwarted his plan almost as soon as it was formed. In consequence of her opposition, my father afterwards gave up all thoughts of it.

"The distinguished kindness he had experienced from the English, and the services which he had been able to render to the East India Company, by throwing light on the navigation of the higher part of the Red Sea, led him to entertain the idea of sending me, as soon as I was old enough, to India. With this scheme, which, plausible as it was, he was afterwards as glad to see frustrated as I was myself, many things in the education he gave me were intimately connected. He taught me, by preference, out of English books, and put English works of all sorts into my hands: at a very early age he

gave me a regular supply of English newspapers;—circumstances which I record here, not on account of the powerful influence they have had on *my* maturer life, but as indications of *his* character."

An intercourse with several distinguished scholars, particularly J. H. Voss, the celebrated translator of Homer, early inspired young Niebuhr with a peculiar love for the classics. His father was intimately acquainted with the famous Büsch, which was the cause of Niebuhr's residence for some time in Hamburgh, where he acquainted himself with commercial affairs. Here, also, he was in constant intercourse with Klopstock, who had a great friendship for the youth. From 1793 to 1794, he studied law in the university of Kiel; but his inclination for the classics continued. When nineteen years old, he went to the university of Edinburgh, in order to study the natural sciences under the professors of that institution, then so famous. He remained one year and a half in Edinburgh, and then travel-

led over England for six months, and obtained an extensive knowledge of the institutions of that country, assisted as he was by a memory of whose power the present writer, in a long residence with Mr. Niebuhr, has seen most surprising proofs.

When he returned from England, he was appointed private secretary to the Danish minister of finance, in which situation he had an opportunity to examine closely the administration of Count A. P. Bernstorff, which, as he himself says, in the biography of his father abovementioned, affected essentially the direction of his whole life. After a certain time, he was appointed a director of the bank. In 1801 he witnessed the bombardment of Copenhagen.

The invasion of Germany (which he always loved as his true country) by the French affected him much; and his translation of the First Philippic of Demosthenes, dedicated to the Emperor Alexander, with a remarkable call upon

him, prove his sentiments. In 1806 he was taken into the Prussian service; but soon after his arrival in Berlin, the battle of Jena changed the whole condition of the kingdom.

In Königsberg, whither he had followed the court, he was appointed one of the counsellors who directed public affairs under Hardenberg, until the peace of Tilsit. He then took an active part in the organization of the Prussian States under the minister Stein. In 1808 he was sent to Holland on a special mission, where he remained fourteen months, during which he always contrived to save some time from his public occupations for study. On his return to Berlin, he was made privy-counsellor of state, and a temporary officer in the department of finances. In 1810, when the university of Berlin was established, his friends persuaded him to deliver his first lectures on Roman history; which were received with such interest by the hearers, and so much commended by men like Buttman, Heindorf, Spalding, and

Sevigny, that he published, in 1811 and 1812, the two volumes of his Roman history.

When the Prussians rose against the French, he established a journal at Berlin, under the title of the Prussian Correspondent; and in 1814 was sent again to Holland, to negotiate a loan with England. On his return in the same year to Berlin, he lost his wife, and, soon after, his father; and, to divert his mind under his losses, he planned the biography of his father, and edited, together with Buttmann and Heindorf, the fragments of Fronto found in Verona by Angelo Maio.

In 1816 he married a second time, and was appointed Prussian minister at the Papal see; and on his passage through Verona to Rome he discovered, in the cathedral library of the former city, the Institutions of Gaius. The chief object of his mission was to arrange with the Pope the reorganization of the Catholic church in the Prussian dominions, which was finally settled by the Prussian concordate when Prince

Hardenberg went to Rome in 1822. The result is the bull *De Salute Animarum*. Pius VII., himself a lover of science, had a great regard for Niebuhr. Even before he went to Italy, his attention had been directed to the importance of the *Codices rescripti*, and the discovery of Gaius added to his interest in the subject, so that he spent much time in Rome in an accurate examination of the manuscripts of the Vatican library; but when Angelo Maio was appointed keeper of the library, a very ill-placed jealousy on his part towards Niebuhr prevented the latter from continuing freely his learned labours, the result of which he made known to the world in his collection of unedited fragments of Cicero and Livy (Rome, 1820); and, at a later period, when a good understanding existed again between Maio and Niebuhr, produced by the disinterested frankness of the latter, he took an active part in Maio's edition of the precious fragments of Cicero's *De Republica*.

His residence in Rome gave him an intimate

knowledge of the localities of the city, and a clearer conception of its ancient character and history. The writer considers him more intimately acquainted than any antiquarian of the place with the relics of the ancient city; and to walk with him over the ancient Forum was like passing along with a guide from classic times, so clear was the whole scene before his eye. His knowledge in this branch appears in his essay "On the Increase and Decline of Ancient, and the Restoration of Modern Rome," which is printed in the first volume of the Description of Rome, by Bunsen and Plattner: it is also published in his minor works. More of the same kind from his pen will appear in the succeeding volumes of the interesting work just mentioned. In this period he also wrote some Latin treatises in the *Atti dell'Academia di Archeologia*, on the Greek inscriptions brought by Gau from Nubia, and a German treatise on the age of Curtius and Petronius, in the Transactions of the Academy of Berlin.

In 1823 he left Rome, and before his return

to Germany went to Naples, where he devoted some hours every day to the collation of the best manuscript of the grammarian Charisius in the library of that city. In Switzerland, he remained six weeks in St. Gall, examining laboriously the manuscripts of the library; and if he expected more than he actually found, he at least discovered some remains of the latest Roman poetry,—that is, poems of Merobaudes.

He settled in Bonn, where the Prussian government had established a university. He wrote here, in the winter of 1823—24, that portion which is finished of the third volume of his History of Rome. He was appointed a member of the council of state, whose sessions he attended at Berlin. The writer entertains a grateful remembrance of a visit which Mr. Niebuhr paid him at this time, when imprisoned in consequence of a political prosecution, and of his release from confinement, obtained through Mr. Niebuhr's intercession. The kindness was the greater, as Mr. Niebuhr's own political

principles were looked on with some suspicion by the men in power.

After his return to Bonn, he determined to remodel the two first volumes of his Roman History before publishing the third, as further researches had changed his views in many respects. He now also began to lecture again; and the fees paid for attendance he devoted to prizes for scientific questions, or to the support of poor students. The first volume (second edition) appeared in 1827, and was so well received, that the third edition appeared in 1828. The second volume was, in its new state, finished only a few months before his death; and in the preface he says, that the melancholy influence of recent political events upon his mind, appears in the mode of the execution of the concluding part of the work. That part of the third volume which he had finished, and which carries the history of Rome from the Licinian law to the last quarter of the fifth century, will probably soon appear.

Niebuhr's activity was great. Every scholar will easily perceive in his History the extensive and unremitted labour which it required; and, towards the close of his life, he added to his other occupations the task of preparing a new edition of the Byzantine Historians. He himself made the beginning with a critical edition of Agathias, and obtained active collaborators, while he superintended the execution of his plan. At the same time he made a collection of his treatises in the Transactions of the Academy of Berlin, and in the Rhenish Museum, which he had edited, together with Professor Brandes, since 1827. His reputation is spread over Europe, and in America he is equally honoured. He died January 2, 1831, at a period of his life which afforded reason for expecting much from him. His wife died on the 11th of the same month.

REMINISCENCES

OF

M. NIEBUHR.

REMINISCENCES

OF M. NIEBUHR.

INTRODUCTION.

WHATEVER contributes to show with clearer delineation the character, dispositions, and intellectual activity of a man like Mr. Niebuhr, the historian, whose labours have already exercised a powerful influence upon an important branch of human science, and will produce a growing effect on every future generation, will be welcomed, I trust, by all who love knowledge and truth. With this view I give the following pages to the public.

At various times, since the death of that great scholar, the idea has occurred to my

mind, that those who enjoyed the rare good fortune of living on terms of intimacy with him would do an essential service to science were they to publish all they know with regard to his studies, opinions, and the more important occurrences in his life. Having lately had occasion to search among my papers, I met with so many notes relating to my intercourse with him, that I resolved at once to collect from them all that appeared to be of general interest, and of which the publication would neither betray his confidence, nor injure the private interest of any person.

From the succeeding pages it will be seen that Mr. Niebuhr received me into his house at an age and period of my life in which no candid reader will expect that judicious foresight which was requisite to note down carefully all the most important facts and views stated at various times by him, even if my natural disposition had been to make so systematic a collection of table-talk.

Disappointed in my most ardent desires, I had returned from Greece, mourning as an enthusiastic youth is apt to mourn when his fondest hopes are first nipped by cold reality. It was at this period that Mr. Niebuhr, who had known neither my family nor anything of myself, received me as the kindest friend. He said to me, in language which has sunk deep into my heart, "Do not be discouraged: come to me, and recover yourself in my house." On another occasion, when he found that I had given up a plan of visiting the Vatican in company with several friends, in order to finish something which he had wished me to do, he said: "I am displeased with you: you ought to have found ere this that I would have you live with me as with a brother." In constant intercourse with such a friend and benefactor, with such a guide in Rome, where all her art, and history, and beauty, burst upon my soul as a new world, of whose character I had but faintly dreamt, but which to know I had always

longed, it will be easily understood that my mind was often too much occupied, and the life I lived too intense, to find time and patience to survey it calmly, and record all I had seen or heard regularly. I kept a journal, indeed; but not unfrequently have I omitted to make notes of what now would be most interesting.

I disclaim, therefore, in the following pages anything like a complete record of every interesting or important sentiment that Mr. Niebuhr stated during my residence with him, or even of all the most important facts or opinions. Besides this deficiency in my journal, it is necessary for me to mention, that my papers were subsequently sealed by the police, and have undergone its penetrating criticism. Some have been lost by this process, others by my wandering life since that time. Still I hope that those which have remained will be judged of sufficient interest, and enable the reader to form a more accurate idea of the distinguished

man to whom they relate; as they will also, in some instances, afford him an interesting insight into the various causes which led to his great work, or facilitated its perfection. In short, I feel assured they will be found of psychological interest both as to the man and the scholar.

I might have grouped the different aphorisms under some general heads; but even this arrangement seemed to me to indicate a promise of giving something complete; or, at any rate, it appeared to me to deprive the various sentiments of that desultory character which they ought to retain in order to remain perfectly natural: as they were gathered, so I give them.

Whoever knows me, will know also that I am not capable of altering or colouring, when I promise to give the words of a man whom I cannot recollect but with the mingled feelings of sadness, veneration, and gratitude, which I owe to him as my best friend. To those of my readers who do not know me personally, I can

only offer what they will find in the work itself, and in the character I may have gained with them by previous publications, as my guarantee for the truth of what I am now going to record. It is that alone which can give any value to these pages. Most of what the reader will find is literal translation: a few circumstances or sentiments I have stated from memory, when they were of a character indelibly to impress themselves upon my mind.

There are many other statements which I recollect with considerable certainty; but I abstain from giving them, lest I might deviate from rigid truth. Some of the most interesting sentiments I have left out, because they might affect persons whose interest it was surely not Mr. Niebuhr's wish to affect: nor have I given anything which I could imagine that he himself, in my situation, would have suppressed, those statements only excepted which show his own excellent character. I need not add, that it would have been

presumptuous in me to record only those opinions of Mr. Niebuhr which happen to coincide with my own. I am desirous of affording to the reader the opportunity to form a more vivid picture of him; my own views have no connexion with this subject.

In order to understand the precise character of the subsequent sentiments, it will be necessary to know in what relation I stood to Mr. Niebuhr. This will be seen from the following account, which is the more gratifying to my heart, as I consider it a tribute to his goodness which it has long been my anxious desire to pay.

I went in the year 1821 to Greece, led by youthful ardour to assist the oppressed and struggling descendants of that people whom all civilized nations love and admire. After having suffered many hardships and bitter disappointments, and finding it impossible either to fight or to procure the means for a bare subsistence, however small, I resolved in

1822 to return, as so many other Philhellenes were obliged to do. The small sum which I had obtained by selling nearly every article I possessed, was rapidly dwindling away: I should have died of hunger had I remained longer. Before, therefore, my money was entirely exhausted, I took passage at Messalunghi in a small vessel bound for Ancona. One scudo and a half was all that remained in my purse after I had paid the commander of the tartan—a price which was very high for the poor accommodation, or rather absence of all accommodation, but only natural considering my helpless state, and that the commander of the vessel was a Greek. We had a rough passage, during which we were obliged to seek shelter in the bay of Gorzola, on the coast of Dalmatia; and on Easter-eve we entered the port of Ancona. I remembered having heard from a fellow-student of mine in Germany, that he intended to abandon the pandects and follow the fine arts: if he had done so, I

concluded he would be by this time in Rome. In a letter, therefore, to one of the first artists in that city, whom I knew only by reputation, I enclosed another to my friend, hoping that the former might have happened to hear of him. In this letter I asked for money to enable me to defray the expenses of the quarantine: should I be unable to do this, the captain who had brought me would have been bound to pay my expenses, and I should have been obliged to pay him by serving on board his vessel. This regulation is fair enough. Caution prohibits anything being touched which comes from persons in quarantine; the establishment, therefore, must furnish articles of comfort and sustenance on credit, which would be often abused if the quarantine establishment had not the right to look to the captain, and the captain to the passenger.

There was then a fair chance that I should have to work for some time as a sailor on board a Greek vessel, until we should go to

anchor in some large port, where I might find a consul of my own nation, to whom I could disclose my situation, and who would feel disposed to assist me until I could obtain from home the means of returning. But my friend happened to be at Rome and to have money, and, with the promptness of a German student, sent me all he possessed at the time.

Unfortunately an old woman who had come with us from Greece died shortly after we entered into quarantine, and we were sentenced to full forty days' *contumacia*. At length the day of liberty arrived. My intention was, of course, to go to Rome; and no sooner had we *pratica*,—as the Italians so justly call this permission to go where you like, all confinement being but a life in theory,—than I went to the police-office to ask for the necessary signature to my passport for Rome.

My passport happened to be in wretched disorder. When I resolved on going to Greece, I lived in Dresden, not unwatched, as I had but

lately left the prison, where I had been confined for political reasons. It was impossible for me to obtain a passport for any length of time, and particularly for a journey to France: yet I had to make my way to Marseilles, where I intended to embark for Greece. I took, therefore, a passport for a journey to Nuremberg, and for the short period of a fortnight only. Once in possession of this paper, I emptied an inkstand over the words which declared it to be limited to so short a space of time. I then had it signed in every small place on my route to Nuremberg, so that it finally looked formidable enough. When I arrived there, I accounted for the defacing ink-blot by the awkwardness of the police-officer of some precious *bureau*, and got the paper signed for Munich. There I chose the time when the chief officers of my legation would probably be gone to dinner to have it farther signed for Switzerland, pretending to be in a great hurry. It

was signed. I passed through Switzerland; and on the French frontier I received, according to rule, a provisionary passport, the other being taken from me to be sent to Paris; from thence it would be forwarded to any place I should indicate. It will be easily supposed that I never cared to receive back the original passport, and it was the provisional French paper with which I had to make my way through the police-office at Ancona.

There was thus an immense gap in my passport; in addition to which, the police-officer, a very polite man, declared that but a few days previously they had received an order from Rome, not to sign the passport of any person coming from Greece except for a direct journey home. I was thunderstruck.

"Would you prevent me from seeing Rome?" said I, probably with an expression which showed the intenseness of my disappointment; for the officer replied in a kind tone, "You see, *carissimo mio*, I cannot do otherwise. You

are a Prussian, and I must direct your passport home to Germany. I will direct it to Florence: your minister there may direct it back to Rome. Or I will direct it to any place in Tuscany which you may choose; for through Tuscany you must travel in order to reach Germany."

I think I never felt more wretched than on leaving the police-office. I had sailed for Greece from Marseilles, and had now returned to Ancona. Had I made my way round Rome without seeing the Eternal City—without seeing her perhaps ever in my life?

A Danish gentleman, who had gone to Greece for the same purpose as myself, who had sailed with me from Messalunghi, and with whom I now had taken lodgings, felt equally disappointed. We went home and threw ourselves on the only bed in our room in silent despair. Could we venture to go to Rome without passports? We should certainly be impeded on our way by gendarmes, particularly as our shabby dress was far from removing all suspicion from these

watchful servants of public safety. We could think of no means of obtaining the object of our most ardent wishes, and yet we could not resolve to abandon it. Thus lying and meditating, I took up, mechanically, a map of Italy: we gazed at it, and our disappointment became but the keener while the classic ground with its thousand associations was thus strikingly represented before our eyes. Suddenly an idea struck us which showed one possible means of realizing our almost hopeless desires.

The map pointed out to us how near the south-western frontier line of Tuscany approaches to Rome. The road from Ancona to Orbitello, a Tuscan place, we thought was nearly the same as that to Rome. Once near the city, we did not doubt but that we might contrive to get into it; and once there, means would be found to remain there.

I started back immediately to the police-office, pretended to have received a letter which informed me of a friend of mine being at Orbi-

tello, and requested the officer to direct my passport to that place. "Orbitello," I added, "is in Tuscany, you know." Italians generally, as is well known, are exceedingly poor geographers; and the gentleman upon whom at this moment the gratification of my fondest wishes depended inquired of another officer in an adjoining room, whether Orbitello was in Tuscany or belonged to the Papal territory. I went into the next room, showed with a trembling hand that Orbitello was situated within the colour which distinguished on the map Tuscany from the other states of Italy;—it was green, I recollect well;—and, to my infinite joy, this gentleman replied, "Yes, sir, it belongs to Tuscany."—"Then direct the passport of the two gentlemen to that place," was the delightful answer; and I hurried away with it from the office, not to betray my emotion.

Whether my anxiety to get to Rome had won us the good graces of these gentlemen of the police, or whatever else may have been the

cause, certain it is that they treated us with much kindness; though I should have blamed no one for keeping at a respectful distance from us, shabby as our whole exterior was. The officer whom I had had the good luck to teach geography extended his politeness even so far as to invite us to take a ride with him: which we, however, prudently declined.

A vetturino was hired, and we left Ancona as soon as possible. At Nepi we had to inform the coachman that we intended to go to Rome, and not to Orbitello, as the roads divide a few miles beyond Nepi, at the *Colonetta*. A trifle smoothed over his objections; and when we were near Rome, we jumped out of the carriage, directed the vetturino to retain our knapsacks until we should call for them, and entered the Porta del Populo as if the porticoes of the churches near it and the obelisk were nothing new to us. My heart beat as we approached the tame-looking sentinel of the Papal troops, more than it ever had beaten at the

approach of any grenadier of the enemy; and the delight I experienced when I had safely passed him, and felt and saw I was in Rome, is indescribable.

I found the friend whom I have already mentioned: he shared his room with me. After I had somewhat recovered from the first excitement caused by the pleasure of seeing him, and a rapid glance at the wonders of Rome, and the consciousness of treading her hallowed ground, I reflected on my situation. I could not reside at Rome for any length of time without having permission from the police. This, again, I could not obtain without a certificate from the minister of my country that my passport was in order. The very contrary was the case, as the reader knows: in fact, I was ashamed to show my passport at the Prussian legation. I resolved, therefore, on disclosing frankly my situation to the minister, Mr. Niebuhr; hoping that a scholar who had written the history of Rome, could not be so cruel as to drive me

from Rome without allowing me time to see and study it. Yet I did not go to the Prussian legation without some fear; for should I be unsuccessful, it was clear that I should be deprived of the residence even of a few weeks at this most interesting of all spots on the face of the globe, which I might have enjoyed before the police regulations would have been applied to me. I knew nothing personally of Mr. Niebuhr; nor whether he would consider himself authorized to grant my wishes, however easy it might be for him to understand all their ardour. He knew nothing of me; and then, how should I appear before him? Certainly not in a very prepossessing condition.

The Prussian minister resided at the Palazzo Orsini, or, as it is equally often called, Teatro di Marcello; for the palace is on and within the remains of the theatre which Augustus built and dedicated to his nephew Marcellus. My heart grew heavier the nearer I approached this venerable pile, to which a whole

history is attached, from the times of antiquity, through the middle ages, when it served as a castle to its proud inmates, and down to the most recent times. The idea that I might be disbelieved, prevented me for a moment from proceeding any farther to that building, under an engraving of which in my possession I now find that I afterwards wrote the words, "*In questa rovina retrovai la vita.*"

I did not see the minister; he was busily engaged; but the secretary of the legation received me with a humanity which made my heart thrill, heightened as was its effect by the contrast with all I had lately experienced. I told my story plainly: he went to the minister, and returned with a paper written in his own hand, on showing which the Papal police were to give me the necessary permission to reside in Rome:—"for," said he, "it is clear that without means you cannot proceed; and as you are probably in want of funds necessary for the moment, the minister has directed me to hand

you this as a loan. You can take it without any unpleasant feeling, as it is part of a sum which Prince Henry (brother to the reigning king, then residing in Rome) has placed at the disposal of Mr. Niebuhr for the assistance of gentlemen who might return from Greece. Prince Henry of course does not wish to know the names of those who have been assisted by his means; so you need feel no scruples."

I had to make yet another request. I was anxious to read Mr. Niebuhr's History of Rome in Rome, and had been unsuccessful in obtaining a copy; I therefore asked whether I might borrow one from Mr. Niebuhr's library. Here my frankness embarrassed the secretary, and he very justly observed that the minister, after all, knew as yet nothing of me. I felt the propriety of his remark, and answered, that I was so desirous of reperusing the work just at this moment, that I had considered it due to myself to make so bold a request, though I was aware I had nothing upon which I could

found any hope of success except the honesty of my purpose. He advised me to ask the minister myself, which I might do the following day at a certain hour when he had expressed a wish to see me.

When I went the next morning at the appointed time, as I thought, Mr. Niebuhr met me on the stairs, being on the point of going out. He received me with kindness and affability, returned with me to his room, made me relate my whole story, and appeared much pleased that I could give him some information respecting Greece, which seemed to be not void of interest to him. Our conversation lasted several hours, when he broke off, asking me to return to dinner. I hesitated in accepting the invitation, which he seemed unable to understand. He probably thought that a person in my situation ought to be glad to receive an invitation of this kind; and, in fact, any one might feel gratified in being asked to dine with him, especially in Rome. When I saw

that my motive for declining so flattering an invitation was not understood, I said, throwing a glance at my dress, "Really, sir, I am not in a state to dine with an excellency." He stamped with his foot, and said with some animation, "Are diplomatists always believed to be so cold-hearted! I am the same that I was in Berlin when I delivered my lectures: your remark was wrong."* No argument could be urged against such reasons.

I recollect that dinner with delight. His conversation, abounding in rich and various knowledge and striking observations; his great kindness; the acquaintance I made with Mrs. Niebuhr; his lovely children, who were so beautiful, that when, at a later period, I used to walk with them, the women would exclaim, "*Ma guardate, guardate, che angeli!*"—a good dinner (which I had not enjoyed for a long time) in a high vaulted room, the ceiling of which was painted in the style of Italian

* *Das war Kleinlich* were his words.

palaces; a picture by the mild Francia close by; the sound of the murmuring fountain in the garden, and the refreshing beverages in coolers, which I had seen, but the day before, represented in some of the most masterly pictures of the Italian schools;—in short, my consciousness of being at dinner with Niebuhr in his house in Rome—and all this in so bold relief to my late and not unfrequently disgusting sufferings, would have rendered the moment one of almost perfect enjoyment and happiness, had it not been for an annoyance which, I have no doubt, will appear here a mere trifle. However, reality often widely differs from its description on paper. Objects of great effect for the moment become light as air, and others, shadows and vapours in reality, swell into matters of weighty consideration when subjected to the recording pen;—a truth, by the way, which applies to our daily life, as well as to transactions of powerful effect;—and it is, therefore, the sifting tact which constitutes one of the most

necessary, yet difficult, requisites for a sound historian.

My dress consisted as yet of nothing better than a pair of unblacked shoes, such as are not unfrequently worn in the Levant; a pair of socks of coarse Greek wool; the brownish pantaloons frequently worn by sea-captains in the Mediterranean; and a blue frock-coat, through which two balls had passed—a fate to which the blue cloth cap had likewise been exposed. The socks were exceedingly short, hardly covering my ankles, and so indeed were the pantaloons; so that, when I was in a sitting position, they refused me the charity of meeting, with an obstinacy which reminded me of the irreconcilable temper of the two brothers in Schiller's Bride of Messina. There happened to dine with Mr. Niebuhr another lady besides Mrs. Niebuhr; and my embarrassment was not small when, towards the conclusion of the dinner, the children rose and played about on the ground, and I saw my poor extremities exposed

to all the frank remarks of quick-sighted childhood; fearing as I did, at the same time, the still more trying moments after dinner, when I should be obliged to take coffee near the ladies, unprotected by the kindly shelter of the table. Mr. Niebuhr observed perhaps that something embarrassed me, and he redoubled, if possible, his kindness.

After dinner he proposed a walk, and asked the ladies to accompany us. I pitied them; but as a gentleman of their acquaintance had dropped in by this time, who gladly accepted the offer to walk with us, they were spared the mortification of taking my arm. Mr. Niebuhr, probably remembering what I had said of my own appearance in the morning, put his arm under mine, and thus walked with me for a long time. After our return, when I intended to take leave, he asked me whether I wished for anything. I said I should like to borrow his History. He had but one copy, to which he had added notes, and which he did not wish,

therefore, to lend out of his house; but he said he would get a copy for me. As to his other books, he gave me the key of his library to take whatever I liked. He laughed when I returned laden with books, and dismissed me in the kindest manner.

A short time after, I had the pleasure of accompanying him and Mr. Bunsen, then his secretary, now minister in his place, to Tivoli, where we remained a few days, residing in a house which belonged to Cardinal Consalvi; and, but a few days after, he invited me to live with him, assisting, if agreeable to me, in the education of his son Marcus. I thus became the constant companion of this rarely-gifted man at meals and on his daily walks after dinner, which were the most instructive hours of my life. He also gave to the Danish gentleman whom I have mentioned the means of returning to his own country.

Mr. Niebuhr proposed to me to write an account of my journey in Greece; which I at first

hesitated to do, as I could give only a lamentable picture; but he showed me how necessary it would be to present a true sketch of the actual state of affairs in that unhappy country, both for the Greeks and those young men who might feel disposed to pursue the same course that I had myself done. I objected besides to the task, as I had little else to relate than the result of sad experience, and should thus tear open wounds which had hardly begun to heal. However, he assured me that I should feel much better satisfied after I had once performed the labour. I went to work, therefore; and what I had written in the afternoon or evening, I read after breakfast to him and Mrs. Niebuhr in the garden. His advice throughout the progress of the work was of the greatest value to me.*

During the summer I accompanied Mr.

* The work was published, under the title, "Journal of my Residence in Greece," Leipzig, 1823; and a Dutch translation of it, under the transformed and catching title, "The German Anacharsis," Amsterdam, 1823.

Niebuhr and his family to Albano, where we resided for some time; and in March 1823, when he quitted the embassy at Rome, he took me with him to Naples; whence we returned in the month of May to Rome, which we left in about a week. By way of Florence, Pisa, and Bologna, we went to the Tyrol; and in Inspruck I took leave of that family with whom alone I then considered my existence tolerable. Mr. Niebuhr went by way of Switzerland, where he passed six weeks at St. Gall to examine the manuscripts of its library, on his way to Bonn.

Mr. Niebuhr honoured me with his correspondence; and when, after my return to Berlin, I was again imprisoned, he, being called to the capital to assist in the council of state then held, paid me a visit at Koepnick,* the place of my confinement. I have to acknowledge this act of kindness with the greater gratitude, as he himself was at that time perhaps not looked

* A small town, about eight miles from Berlin.

upon without some degree of political distrust. I have reason to believe that I owe my second liberation greatly to his exertions.

A great effort was made during this session of the council of state to establish a national bank; and Mr. Niebuhr, abhorring the stock-jobbing spirit then so universally spread over Europe, and believing that a national bank would greatly increase this evil, and be but a tempting and ready means for ruinous money transactions of government, strained every nerve to prevent a bank. He succeeded; and when the memorable commercial revolution of 1825 took place, he congratulated himself on having prevented still greater mischief in Prussia by his exertions against a bank. In a letter to Count Bernstorff, then minister of foreign affairs, dated February 22, 1826, which he sent me open, as a letter of recommendation to be delivered if I should pursue a certain plan I had communicated to him, * he said,

* The letter was not delivered.

after having expressed his acknowledgment for a favour bestowed upon him by government: "I make bold to believe myself entitled to some small favour, even if for no other reason than that I have prevented the establishment of the bank. What would the state and public not have suffered had that project been executed! How many more families would have been ruined!"—The favour of which he speaks was nothing else than a more convenient arrangement of the payment of his salary, as he had suffered considerable loss by the failure of a house in which he had placed most of his funds.

When I resided in London, the university of that city was in course of organization, and I intended to apply for the chair of the German and Northern languages. Before I had made, however, any proper application, I was induced to go to America. In the mean time, I had written to Germany for testimonials by which I might prove my fitness for the desired profes-

sorship. Mr. Niebuhr promptly sent me the desired paper, expressing his opinion in terms which gave me the greatest pleasure, though I never had occasion to use it. The letter in which he sent it, and which is dated March 23, 1827, contains the following passage, which may not be uninteresting with regard to a more accurate knowledge of himself, as well as in a general view.

"The enclosed contains the recommendation, which I send you with great pleasure, as it agrees with my conscience as much as my wishes for your success agree with my heart may it be useful to you in some way or other! Competition will be great; and gentlemen will not be wanting who have the support of present and influential friends. In general, I trust to your good star, which has so far never abandoned you; though in this special case you may be unsuccessful.

"As I understand, two very different elements are active in the erection of the London

University—the Whigs and Radicals. Both belong to a time that has passed. The first do not know precisely what they want, except power and independence upon government, in the sense of the old barons, only reduced and applied to our own time: † their property is their idol. * * * * *

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They have as miserable a contempt towards foreigners, especially towards us Germans, as the Tories. This I say in general; yet there are many exceptions, and most of my friends in England are Whigs. By this time you will

† The reader will remember when Mr. Niebuhr wrote the letter; at present, the name Whig signifies something different. Besides, it must not be forgotten, that Mr. Niebuhr, though an attentive observer of his own time as it passed on, had received many impressions when the Whigs stood in a still different position from what they occupied in 1827. In general, I can only say, that many readers, though far from subscribing to the *modern* political inconsistencies, (each period has its own,) will think that Mr. Niebuhr, in some cases, looked back upon past times with too much fondness, thus undervaluing the present time, as is not unfrequently the case with historians.

know the Radicals: free of many prejudices of the two other parties, less insolent towards foreign countries, yet they show less justice towards us, in particular, than to other foreign nations. Their political economy is no deep wisdom;* yet they feel at least some interest in the welfare of the million, though they restrict this interest to their physical welfare. This, however, is much in these times of egotism—the cancer of which England is dying. Mr. ——, who will be an influential person in the university matters, belongs, to speak honestly, to this party; so does Mr. —— (whom you will find in the counting-house of his company, No. —, —— street.) Go to both with my most pressing recommendations: both are violent political economists, so take a little care what you say. My name may also perhaps be of use with Mr. Brougham: try to become acquainted with him; I know you will make him soon feel interested in you. Endeavour to

* *Ist eine schaale weisheit*, are the words of the original.

become acquainted with Mr. Grote, who is engaged on a Greek History; he, too, will receive you well if you take him my regards.* If you become better acquainted with him, it is worth your while to obtain the proof-sheets of his work, in order to translate it: I expect a great deal from this production, and will get you here a publisher. If the Marquis of Lansdown has it in his power to be useful to you, go by all means to him: my name, I feel sure, will be of use with him. You ought to look around for other works besides that of Mr. Grote; for instance, the Journey to Cyrenaica will probably find no other translator. Journeys of this kind, which contain inscriptions, &c. would meet with publishers in Germany, especially if a philologer—for instance myself—would add some notes and a preface: but for this it would be necessary to have the original. If you will send the inscriptions of the Journey in Cyrenaica, but copied in the most careful possible way, with

* I had already become acquainted with that gentleman through the kindness of Mrs. Austin.

what the author says, written on the thinnest letter-paper, and husbanding the room, directed to Mr. Weber, in Bonn, and inside to the Privy-counsellor Niebuhr, for the Rhenish Museum, I can offer you two frederics-d'or for each sheet which the inscriptions and translations with my notes may occupy. But they must be most carefully copied! You would no doubt find some one with whose aid you might compare them. Give always the titles with great accuracy.—I wish to know how the undertaking of Messrs. Hare and Thirlwood proceeds. —Room is wanting to write more: indeed, my time, too, is limited. For five quarters of a year I have worked at my History with an effort which has nearly exhausted my strength: I find it difficult now to continue;" &c.

Before I embarked for America, I communicated to Mr. Niebuhr my wish to enter into a connexion with the best German paper; and in Boston I received a long letter from him, dated September 13th, 1827, of which the following are extracts.

"I have received your farewell letter from London, my dear friend, and, *via* Hamburgh, the letter which you wrote at sea. This shows me that you have safely arrived in the New World, though you have not added anything on this point. From New York you will have gone on good roads and in coaches, probably very different from those which are described by former travellers, to Boston, where I and all my family not only wish from all our hearts, but confidently hope, that you will be happy, as far as this is possible in a foreign and not inspiring country. I approve of your resolution to go to America so entirely, that had you been able to ask my advice beforehand, I should have unqualifiedly urged you to go: for there is little happiness in England for him who does not stand in the centre of the briskest activity,—who, as a foreigner must do, has but the looking on. The New-England States in which you live are indeed worthy of the name; which, south of the Potomac, would not be

befitting. It is England without any aristocracy and tradition, active and busy only in the material world; hence without beautiful illusions, but also without English political hypocrisy. Only beware that you do not fall into an idolatry of the country, and that state of things which is so dazzling because it shows the material world in a favourable light. You are able to do this if you will be watchful over yourself: you have judgment and philosophical tact enough to protect yourself. Remain a German, and without counting hour and day, yet say to yourself that the hour and day will come when you will be able to return.

"Agreeably to your desire to retain some literary connexion with Germany, I wrote to Baron Cotta, of whom you also have thought. As the Allgemeine Zeitung has no correspondent in America, I counted upon a favourable reception; and I have not been disappointed. Baron Cotta offers you to correspond for, 1, the Allgemeine Zeitung; 2, the Morgenblatt; 3, the

Kunstblatt; 4, the Literary Gazette; 5, the Polytechnic Journal; 6, the Political Annals; and 7, for the Ausland, a journal solely destined for news of foreign countries. * *

"In regard to your correspondence for the Allgemeine Zeitung, I will undertake to give you some directions, as nearly all correspondents of this paper (if not all without exception) mistake their proper point of view. I almost feel tempted to write a dissertation on that point, had I the time for it; but I am pressed indeed. Therefore abstract for yourself, and may it suffice *in concreto*, that the correspondence from the United States must be twofold: *A.* on Home affairs, *B.* on Foreign affairs.——*Ad. A.* It has to represent, *a* the state of things, *b* events. As respects *a*, I think that extensive statistical and ethnographic accounts belong more properly to larger collections,—for instance, the Political Annals. But moral and personal relations, briefly stated, belong to the paper: for instance, information respecting the persons who compose

the government; on the relations between the different states; whether there are any, and if so, whether increasing, collisions between them; powers and interests which prepare great events and changes; the relations to foreign countries; &c.—*b*, the events to be described are the general ones of the Union, and those of the single states. Under this head do not only belong political events, properly speaking, but also legislative acts; and not only general federal legislation, but also that of single states: for instance, when a state changes its constitution, or its civil or criminal laws;—respecting the federal government, changes, new regulations in the army or navy, besides single statistical notices, particularly comparative ones, which show the material increase; censusses, &c. Single anecdotes belong more properly to the Morgenblatt.——*B*. This correspondence must comprise the neighbouring British provinces, as well as Mexico and South America. Pay especial attention to the former, whence we receive so few descriptions by tour-

ists. You must glean from papers and pamphlets, which reach Europe rarely, except when they are sent to some dozen people in England. Here, too, statistics are of the greatest importance to show improvement or the contrary; farther, accounts on the relation between the mother country and the colonies. Respecting the independent states you must write in the same way as has been stated with regard to the United States. The task is not easy! I require of a correspondent of a newspaper the same that I endeavoured to do in my reports to the king when I was minister, and what I as secretary-of-state for foreign affairs should expect from every diplomatic agent. It is all-important to be conscientious and true to the letter. The correspondent of a newspaper is the ambassador, not of its proprietor, but of the public. Before you begin your correspondence, look calmly around, and find your true point of view. Respecting the feud between the northern and southern states, I am de-

cidedly Yankee and Anti-Virginian. But being fifty-one years old, should I get there, I neither would trust the former unconditionally, nor disapprove of the others unconditionally. * *

" One thing I cannot sufficiently recommend to you—you must not take it amiss, my best friend; it is indeed not intended as reflecting upon you, but it must be a vast, extensive shoal, because all newspaper correspondents wreck upon it: *no political dissertations and generalities, but facts simply and concisely related.* If you meet with notices of discoveries, whether from the South Sea, the interior of America, the Columbia river, or from the back settlements on the Missouri, Arkansas, &c. think of your friend, that you give him great pleasure with these things, and send them for insertion in the extra sheets of the Allgemeine Zeitung; for this paper is the only one of the whole circle which I, so horridly pressed for time, look at.

" In writing to you to Boston, I feel heavily

an old debt of correspondence to Mr. —— of Boston, with regard to himself individually on account of his honourable article on my History, and as secretary of the Academy, in whose name he has honoured me with a letter. How old is this debt! But if Mr. ——, and every other person who considers himself neglected by me, knew in what degree I am overburdened with labour since I have resumed the continuation of my History, they would all pardon me. Besides the History, I have now also "The Museum," (a periodical,) and the direction of the new edition of the Byzantine Historians. I may say, that the latter *alone* would be quite sufficient to bend down many a one, especially one who delivers lectures at the same time. It causes an indispensable correspondence, which cannot be delayed. In addition to this, I must mention the abominable loss of time by travellers. This one thing I beg of you, my dear friend,—don't give *easily* letters of introduction: these people

murder my time.* Therefore, give my very best regards to Mr. ——, and tell him, that, notwithstanding my silence, I am very grateful to him. I believe I do not err in being desirous that you should select him especially as your friend in the other hemisphere, and that you should confer with him respecting the correspondence. Perhaps you will communicate to him from this letter. The paper is filled to the very margin, and therefore I can only add, God bless you! My wife and children send their love. Marcus thinks and speaks of you as if we had left Rome but a few weeks ago. I wish to hear from you: if I do not write, do not stop on that account. To-day I have done you a real act of friendship. My wife's health is but middling; that of the children excellent; my own declining. Yours," &c. &c.

* It is known of Ernesti, that when a person extended a visit over ten minutes, he would rise, point at a large clock, and say, "You have been here ten minutes."

Mr. Niebuhr's lamented death took place in January 1831.

It has been my purpose to show in what relation I stood to that excellent man; but I have not pretended to exhibit all that he was to me, nor what I owe him, strongly impressed as my mind has been by such an association; I therefore here close my relation.

The judicious reader will easily distinguish among the following aphorisms those which express Mr. Niebuhr's settled opinion, from others which show an occasional view he may have taken; though all, it appears to me, are serviceable in drawing a more accurate picture of him.

To many it will not be uninteresting to know something of the habits and personal peculiarities of so distinguished a man.

Mr. Niebuhr was small in stature and thin; his voice, of a very high pitch. He could not see well at a distance, and made sometimes strange mistakes. Spectacles were indis-

pensable to him; and I had once to make a day's journey in order to fetch his Dollond's, which had been forgotten. He lived very frugally; wine and water was his usual beverage: he valued good wine, but did not drink it often. He frequently shaved while walking up and down the room; and when I was present, he would even talk during this dangerous operation. He disliked smoking very much, but took snuff to such an excess, that he had finally to give it up. He did not write, as the ancient scholar, a whole book with one pen; but he used a pen a very long time before he mended it, turning it all round so as to use always its sharp point. Yet he wrote a neat and legible hand.

His rare memory enabled him to study frequently without a pen; and I found him sometimes in a lying posture on a sofa, holding the work of an ancient writer over his head. These were not works which he read by way of relaxation; but, not unfrequently, those he studied

with the keenest attention. His memory, indeed, was almost inconceivable to others. He remembered almost everything he had read at any period of his life. He was about twenty years old when he studied at Edinburgh, and I was present when he conversed at Rome with an English gentleman upon some statistical statement which he had read in the English papers at the time of his residence in that country. The statement was important to the stranger, a member of parliament, if I remember right; and Mr. Niebuhr desired me to take pen and paper, and forthwith he dictated to me a considerable column of numbers, to the great surprise of the English visiter. What an immense power such a man would have in a deliberative assembly, merely on account of his unrelaxing memory! He did not undervalue the great importance of this faculty, which, though it be but an instrument, is the most useful and indispensable of all instruments in all pursuits, disregarded by those only who

have none. Nor is a retentive memory without its moral value both for individuals and nations; and there was truth in the remark of Goethe's friend in Strasburg, that a man with a bad memory was necessarily exposed to the vice of ingratitude.

Mr. Niebuhr and myself had conversed one day on the great power which a man with a tenacious memory often has over another not equally gifted, merely by an array of facts and dates, though the strength of the argument may be decidedly on the other side; and how necessary it therefore becomes to cultivate the memory. He said, "Without a strong memory I never should have been able to write my History, for extracts and notes would not have been sufficient; they would again have formed an inaccessible mass, had I not possessed the index in my mind."

Gibbon, though he does not say how much he owes of his whole fame to his excellent memory, gives us at least an anecdote in his

"Memoirs of my Life and Writings,"* which proves in how great a degree he enjoyed this blessing, and justly valued it. It is very evident that the soundest judgment and clearest mind could not have penetrated into the moving causes of the ages he describes, had not his memory always held in readiness all the innumerable facts, from which it is the historian's duty to make his abstracts.

Mackintosh, no mean authority for the true way of studying history, says: "The genius of history is nourished by the study of original narrators, and by critical examination of the

* Gibbon says:—"The ode which he (Voltaire) had composed on his first arrival on the banks of the Leman Lake, '*O maison d'Aristippe! O jardin d'Epicure,*' &c. had been imparted as a secret to the gentleman by whom I was introduced. He allowed me to read it twice; I knew it by heart; and as my discretion was not equal to my memory, the author was soon displeased by the circulation of the copy. In writing this trivial anecdote, I wished to observe whether my memory was impaired, and I have the comfort of finding that every line of the poem is still engraved in fresh and indelible characters."

minute circumstances of facts. Ingenious speculations and ostentatious ornaments are miserable substitutes for these historical virtues; and their place is still worse supplied by the vivacity or pleasantry which, where it is most successful, will most completely extinguish that serious and deep interest in the affairs of men which the historian aims to inspire." Generally, there will be found to exist some connexion between a disposition to deal in generalities, and a want of patient study of historical details, or of that good memory which enables the student to feel at home in past ages almost as much as in his own, by keeping all the minor facts in a vivid picture before his mind—present without a conscious mental exertion, as if it were reality itself. This is not only true of historians, but of philosophers, and any other persons occupying themselves with reasoning upon important points. Rousseau would, probably, not have drawn so largely upon sentimental emotions and views suggested by feelings, had

not his weak memory, of which he complains so much, made it impossible for him to judge more distinctly from facts, and experience derived from them.

When we travelled home from Rome, Mr. Niebuhr had hired two vetturini for his two carriages, who took us as far as Inspruck. One of them knew neither how to read nor to write; the other was pretty well able to keep his accounts: both had to account to their masters for all their expenses and receipts on their return to Rome. The one who had learned to write seemed to us to be continually troubled with making his expenses square with the sums he had received from Mr. Niebuhr, while his companion appeared to be in no such trouble. On our inquiry, we found that the latter actually relied solely on his memory, and that he was able to name every trifling expense for himself and his horses, and where and when he had made it. It was an astonishing feat of memory, and Mr. Niebuhr said, "After all, Plato

was not so wrong in what he says of the invention of letters."*

A peculiarity not less striking was, that Mr. Niebuhr was able to study and write when there was great noise around him. Neither the

* In the Phædrus, 274 and 275, we find the following as said by Socrates;—

"I have heard that one of the old gods had been at Naucrates in Egypt, to whom also the bird called Ibis was sacred; but he himself, the god, was called Theuth. He is said to have invented numbers and the art of calculation; furthermore, geometry and astronomy, and also the game at draughts and dice, and likewise letters. At that time Thamus is said to have been king of all Egypt, in the large city of the upper country, which the Greeks call the Egyptian Thebes,—the god himself, however, Ammon. To him Theuth is said to have gone, to have shown his inventions, and to have asked that they should be communicated to the other Egyptians. The former asked of what use each invention would be; and he praised or blamed according to whether he thought what Theuth said just or unjust. Thamus is said to have replied to Theuth a great deal for and against each art, which would be too extensive to be mentioned here. But when they got to the letters, Theuth said, "This art, O king, will make the Egyptians wiser and stronger in memory, for it has been invented as a means for the understanding and memory." But the other said, "O ingenious Theuth, some know how to bring to light that which belongs to the arts, others

playing of his children in the same room, nor the loud conversation of others, would disturb him when he had once taken the pen; reminding us of Lambert, whose power of abstraction is said to have enabled him to write some of his most luminous papers on mathematics and optics in the corner of a frequented room of a public coffee-house.

to judge how much advantage or disadvantage they will bring those who make use of them. Thus thou, too, hast said this moment, as the father of letters, from love for them, the contrary of that which they will actually effect. For this invention will fill with forgetfulness rather the souls of the learners, on account of their neglect of the memory; as, relying on these letters, they will remember things rather from without by means of signs foreign to the matter, but not within them and directly. Not, therefore, for the memory, but only for remembrance, thou hast invented a means; and only the appearance, not the essence, thou shalt convey to thy disciples. For, having heard much without instruction, they will also believe themselves to be possessed of much knowledge, though they are ignorant and difficult to be treated, after they have become conceited instead of wise."

There are, doubtless, more finished translations in existence; but having a copy of Plato in the original only at hand, I give the above, which will answer as well for the purpose for which it is quoted here.

Though the whole range of the classics was ever present to his mind, which appeared most forcibly when he met with a new inscription, or ruin, the remains of a manuscript, or the like; yet he hardly ever quoted for ornament; nor did he interlard his letters or other communications with passages from the ancient writers. I do not remember that he ever expressed himself on the subject, but I believe it would not have suited his mind. That he was too familiar with them to be vain of quotations, is a matter of course; but I believe, besides, that quotations of the kind would not have been congenial to his cast of mind, which looked too much at the real state of things in antiquity, to indulge in these ornamental illustrations, except when some truly witty application could be made. Instead of believing that great weight was attached to a sentiment merely because it had been stated by a very remote authority, he frequently illustrated antiquity by instances taken from modern times, as his History shows. It may be remembered here, that the preface

to his History of Rome contains but three quotations: one of them, from an ancient writer, is given by him in German; another is from Goëthe; and the only one in a foreign language is in Spanish; and all are so simple, that they almost lose the character of quotations.

In general it may be observed, that quotations from the classics, or, in fact, from any authors, for ostentation or as mere ornament of speech, seem to be considered by the Germans as pedantic, or, perhaps, as betraying the pleasure which the quoting author or orator derives from having overcome the difficulty of learning a foreign language. There was, indeed, a time when the "rector" of a German gymnasium would have believed that he might lend additional strength to the different lines of the multiplication-table, could he show that Cicero had happened to mention one of them; but at present quoting is not fashionable among the learned Germans. All of them read too much to be proud of it; nor have they, gene-

rally speaking, so much regard for authorities, in whatever branch of the sciences or arts, as to consider insertions from early writers valuable additions to the strength of their composition. It is quite different with regard to the respect they pay to the history of every subject: there, pedantry is often on the side of the Germans.

The German taste with regard to this point is another instance of the different view the German and English nations take of the period which, with the Germans, is sometimes called the age of wigs — somewhat synonymous with the age of stiffness or pedantry. This meaning would by no means be attached to a similar expression in England, neither with regard to politics nor literature. On a former occasion I have spoken more fully on this striking difference.* Mr. Niebuhr liked the simplest style of writing; though his earlier German may some-

* In "The Stranger in America," vol. i. pages 116 et seq. in the London edition; pages 75 and 76 in the Philadelphia edition.

times betray his intimate familiarity with Latin.

He cannot be said to have been of a decidedly gay disposition; yet he loved hilarity and relished a joke. He greatly enjoyed the broad comedy of S. Carlino in Naples, and we repaired often to that temple of hearty merriment during our stay in this city. I could always amuse him by telling him of some ludicrous occurrence. He was a good man, and therefore open to mirth. "Come," said he one day at Naples, "let us see the macaroni-eaters again;" their skilful swallowing of the endless and pliant pipes of this "charming vegetable," as Scaramouch said, having greatly diverted him. Yet he was far from relishing anything which savoured in the least of coarseness. His feelings were altogether refined, and those of a finely organised mind.

I have found him repeatedly rolling on the ground with his children: nor did he ask the beholders whether they had any children, as that

personage did who affords a royal precedent to all fathers that love to play on the ground with their offspring.

His simplicity was very great: he could forgive where others would have long remembered. Frankness was a peculiarly striking feature in his admirable character. I found him one day pale, and asked him whether he did not feel well. "I feel sad," said he, "and have not slept well. I have punished my Marcus last night, for I felt convinced that he had not told me the truth; proofs appeared to be convincing: and yet, I found afterwards that he was innocent." He asked the child's pardon several times. His love to his children was exceedingly great; and he held his first wife (not the mother of these children) in sacred memory. I have seen him and his second wife, a relative to his first, standing before her portrait in silent contemplation. She had been an uncommon woman, to whom he read everything before publication. He said once to me, he

thought that, except medical and law books, few others ought to be written so that they might not be read by women; and it was he who advised me to give in a Latin note to my Journey in Greece, what he considered too interesting to be omitted, and yet unfitted to be read by females.* "If," added he, "a lady knows Latin, why then it is enough for the author to have shown that the part in Latin is not intended for her."

Having spoken of that note to my Journal, so painfully interesting to the student of the causes of general morality or depravity, I will add here, that the *testis idoneus*, mentioned there as having communicated to me the information of that conspiracy of peasants in a part

* He added himself to the note the following words, as if written by me:—"Denique hoc moneo, me, Anglorum exemplo, qui in itinerum narratione perscribenda fœdas quasdam res necessariò attigerunt, Latino sermone usum esse in his rebus disputandis, ne scilicet matronarum pudorem offenderem, quas à libello meo perlegendo minime absterritas, neque, illum legisse, iis rubori esse vellem."

of northern Germany, which is as peculiar as it is odious and strikingly interesting to the political economist, is Mr. Niebuhr himself. (See page 77 of my Journal in Greece, quoted before.)

His physical courage was not great, though his conviction and feeling of duty would have prompted him to expose himself to any danger. He was easily thrown into alarm with regard to himself as well as to his family. A fish-bone which stuck in his throat during our dinner at Mola di Gaeta threw him into complete terror.

His mind was formed to observe man in his various relations, such as commerce, agriculture, and politics. He took delight in applying the knowledge thus gathered to times long gone by, but familiar to him by persevering study, extensive knowledge of languages, and a vivid memory. He was a politician in history, and a historical philologist. His power of combi-

nation was remarkable, as the reader may know from his works. This formed the strength of his mind. Though he loved the fine arts, and was delighted by master-works, still, I believe, he had no acute eye for them; nor was his love of the fine arts a matter of the inmost soul. They did not form a sphere in which his mind moved with independence.

With regard to politics, Mr. Niebuhr must be classed with those who look back rather than forward. His heart was with the people, but he disliked modern political principles.

No scholar was ever more impartial than he was; he loved science wherever it appeared. To assist in the furtherance of a clever botanical work was as important to him as any historical inquiry; and he told me once, that he had proposed at the time of the humiliation of Prussia, that the members of the royal academy, of which he was himself one, should give up the small salary they enjoyed as academicians, in order to call one of the

first mathematicians for the joint sum to Berlin.

He was quick, and at times impatient, as most men of active mind are. One day he was very angry with a servant whom he had called repeatedly and who made him wait a long while, when the time of an important appointment with Cardinal Consalvi had already passed. "Ah, Eccellenza," said the servant, "*i viaggi in questo palazzo sono lunghi.*" I could not help laughing at this hyperbolical speech; and he soon joined me, though his situation was indeed a trying one. Another servant said on a similar occasion, and with similar effect:— "*Che vuol che dica? Se avessi per ogni cosa una testa sola.*"

The engraving at the beginning of this volume is a copy of a drawing which the celebrated painter, Mr. Schnorr, kindly made for me from the original which he had taken of Mr. Niebuhr. It resembles him very much, though the face appears too broad.

All the sentiments of the succeeding pages, which are given without farther remark of my own, are to be taken as the literal expressions of Mr. Niebuhr himself.

Philadelphia, April 1835.

REMINISCENCES.

Liberty depends not only upon the legislative branch.

In most of the late attempts at establishing free institutions, nations have committed the great mistake of seeking liberty in the legislative branch only, or mainly; but liberty depends at least as much upon the administrative branch* as upon any other. The English are the only modern European nation who have acted differently; and the freedom of North America rests upon this great gift from Old England even more than on the representative form of her government, or anything else. We are swallowed up by *bureaucracy*; all

Verwaltung was the German word.

public spirit* is smothered. And then, of what use is a representative and debating council, as in France, if all the rest is founded on the principle of this concentrated *bureaucracy*—if the minister has to carry out the general law into all its details? With such a power, a chamber can generally be bought; and then the ministerial influence is but the more absolute, while all odium falls upon the nominal law-makers. But here (in Rome), in Spain, and in Portugal, there are neither the British principle, nor bureaucratic order, and system, and precision. In these countries there is an independent action of the different members, but not of the minor circles. Our Stein† has done much to re-introduce this healthy action.

* *Gemeinsinn* was the word he used.

† Charles, Baron de Stein, for some time Prussian minister of state,—*un certain Stein*, as the Moniteur called him, when an intercepted letter had shown that he was secretly preparing for the deliverance of Germany from the French, and Napoleon had outlawed him. The tendency of the Prussian government, as in fact that of almost every government on the continent of Europe, had been, for a

England.

My early residence in England gave me one important key to Roman history. It is necessary to know civil life by personal observation, in order to understand such states as those of antiquity. I never could have understood a number of things in the history of Rome without having observed England. Not that the idea of writing the history of Rome was then

long time, to concentrate as much as possible all power, and to rule by a uniform bureaucracy. Mr. de Stein, equally far from approving the modern principles of liberal representative government, as from considering bureaucratic concentration beneficial to the people, induced the King of Prussia to issue the well-known *Städteordnung*; an ordinance by which the privilege of self-government was, in a degree, restored to the cities of the kingdom. Mr. Niebuhr, who entertained a very high opinion of Baron de Stein, also believed that this *Städteordnung* might have become the groundwork of an enlarged and highly beneficial system of legislation had Stein remained in office. He expresses this view in the preface to the work mentioned in the next note.

clear within me; but when, at a later period, this idea became more and more distinct in my mind, all the observation and experience I had gained in England came to my aid, and the resolution was taken.

Niebuhr's work on Great Britain.

He published the work on Great Britain* after that unfortunate time when a foreign people ruled over us (Germans) with a cruel sword and a heartless bureaucracy, in order to show what liberty is. Those who oppressed us, called themselves all the time the harbingers of liberty, at the very moment they sucked the very heart-blood of our people; and we wanted to show what liberty in reality is.

* Representation of the Internal Government of Great Britain, by Baron von Vincke, edited by B. G. Niebuhr. Berlin, 1815.

Historiographers of Rome.

The great misfortune has been, that, with one or two exceptions, those who have written on Roman history either had not the stuff* for it, or they were no statesmen. Yet no one can write a history of this great people without being a statesman, and a practical one too.

The same.

No wonder that so little has been done in Roman history; for a Roman historian ought to be a sound and well-read philologer, and a practical statesman.

[I asked whether some periods of Roman history did not require also military knowledge. Mr. Niebuhr answered—]

Roman history can be understood by a states-

* *Zeug* was his expression.

man who is not a general, but not by a general who is no statesman; for it is the growth of the law which constitutes the essential part of Roman history. Military knowledge, in a considerable degree, is always necessary, I admit; but then this may be obtained without one's being necessarily a soldier.

Niebuhr and Gibbon.

If God will only grant me a life so long that I may end where Gibbon begins, it is all I pray for.

[After a pause he added:—] Yes; if I should be spared longer, I would do yet something more. There is still much to be done. Your generation has a great deal to do, my friend.

Carnot.

For Carnot I feel great respect. In some points, he is the greatest man of this century. His virtue is of an exalted kind. When he invents a new system of tactics to oppose the old armies of Europe, hastens to the army, teaches how to be victorious with them, and returns to Paris, he appears great indeed. However I differ from his political views, there is a republican greatness in him which commands respect. My love for him may be an anomaly; yet so it is.

The same.

Had I nothing in the wide world but a piece of bread left, I would be proud of sharing it with Carnot.

Holland and Belgium.—The King and Queen of the Netherlands.

I used to know the King of the Netherlands well, when he lived in great retirement in Berlin, after having been driven from Holland by the French. He took great interest in my History, and read and studied a good deal. He is a character of sterling worth: so is the queen; she is a woman of the purest character, mild and charitable. They are a couple wishing as anxiously the good of their people as any that ever sat upon a throne. I believe there are very few women, in whatever rank of life, to be compared in excellence to the Queen of the Netherlands. The king asked my views respecting the union of Holland and Belgium,* and the

* I think I am correct in this statement; quite sure I am that he said he had communicated his views such as stated above to the king, which he hardly would have done

constitution. You know he was averse to taking Belgium. I declared most positively that this would never do: if Belgium must be under the same sceptre with Holland, they ought at least to remain separated like Norway and Sweden. There is, in fact, much more reason for separation with the Dutch and Belgians. They have nothing in common: language, religion, interests — everything is directly opposed. The Belgians are poor copies of the French. I cannot believe that the present arrangement will end well: I have very serious fears and misgivings. May God grant that my fears are unfounded, and my speculations will be put to nought!

had he not been asked so to do. But I think he said distinctly that the sketch of the constitution had been shown him. I believe, moreover, that he said the king was of his opinion as to separate governments for Holland and Belgium, but that he was outvoted by his counsellors.—The above remark was made in the year 1822.

Mr. Niebuhr's knowledge of Latin.

I am now able to write Latin: it is but within a few years that I could say so. I always could write it, as it is called; and did so with the pleasure we feel in writing pretty fluently in a foreign language, especially an ancient one; but now I feel the language is mine. I see that I do not only write it correctly, but I feel I write it as my own language: I even prefer to express myself on some subjects in that idiom. I am pleased to see that the Italians allow this to me; for though they have remained greatly behind the Germans in philology and knowledge of antiquities, they have always retained some good writers of Latin. It is still *their* language. Look at my Marcus; how easily he reads the Latin translation of Homer!

[Marcus, Mr. Niebuhr's son, then about four years old, had learned Italian as his first lan-

guage. His parents originally intended to talk German to him, while his nurse, an Italian woman, taught him the idiom of her country. But the consequence was, what by no means is generally the case under similar circumstances, that the child would not speak at all. The parents then wisely resolved to give up the German for a year or two. He now learned Italian rapidly; and when I entered the house of Mr. Niebuhr, Marcus had begun to read a Latin translation of Homer, in which he made such rapid progress, that he soon understood the Latin with very little assistance except that of his own Italian.

Homer.

What wisdom there is in Homer! With a few omissions, it is the very book for children. I know of no story, except Robinson Crusoe, which fascinates a child so much as Homer. It

is all natural, simple, and capable of being understood by a child. And then, how well does he not prepare for all the knowledge of antiquity, without which we cannot now get along! How many thousand things and sayings does the child not understand at once by knowing that great poem! The whole Odyssey is the finest story for a child.

Have you ever read Pope's Odyssey? [I answered in the negative.]

Well, he replied, you must read some parts of it at least; it is a ridiculous thing, as bad as the French heroes of Greece in periwigs. There is not a breath of antiquity in Pope's translation. He might have changed as much as he liked, and called it a reproduction; but to strip it of its spirit of antiquity, was giving us a corpse instead of a living being. It is a small thing. How totally different is the manner in which the German Voss has handled the subject. He shows at once that he knows and feels the poem is antique, and he means to leave it so. Voss's

translation might certainly be improved in various parts, but he has made Homer a German work, now read by every one: he has done a great thing. You do not imagine it, yet it is a fact, that Voss's translation of Homer has had a great influence upon your own education. I say it, well considering what I say, that the influence of the labours of Voss on the whole German nation will be so great, that other nations will feel and acknowledge it.

[The reader will be reminded by this remark, of what Mr. Niebuhr wrote at a later period in the preface to his second edition of the History of Rome:—

"We (the Germans) had now," he says, on page viii. of the English translation, "a literature worthy of our nation and language; we had Lessing and Goëthe: and this literature comprised, what none had yet, a great part of the Greek and Roman, not copied, but, as it were, reproduced. For this Germany is indebted to Voss, whom our grandchildren's chil-

dren and grandchildren must extol as their benefactor; with whom a new age for the knowledge of antiquity begins; inasmuch as he succeeded in eliciting out of the classical writers, what they presuppose, their notions of the earth, for instance, and of the gods, their ways of life and their household habits; and understood and interpreted Homer and Virgil as if they were our contemporaries, and only separated from us by an interval of space. His example wrought upon many: upon me, ever since my childhood, it has been enforced by personal encouragement from this old friend of my family."]

Mr. Niebuhr's Knowledge of Languages.

[I had found a Russian grammar and some Russian books in his library, and asked him whether he had ever studied that language. He said:]

Oh yes, I would not leave the whole Slavonic* stock of languages untouched; and I wished to understand all the *European* languages at least. Every one may learn them: it is easy enough after we once know three. I now understand all the languages of Europe pretty well, not excepting my Low German, only these Slavonic idioms excepted; I have not read much in them; yet I know them. Have you ever studied Dutch?

[Not yet, I answered.]

Well, he continued, do not omit it; it is well to understand it for its own sake, as well

* I write *Slavonic*, though the learned and accomplished author of the "Historical View of the Slavic Language in its various Dialects," (Andover, Massachusetts, 1834,) uses the shorter form *Slavic*. She is certainly good authority on this point, and Slavic is more correct than Slavonic, which the English have formed of the French *Esclavon;* but *Slavic* has a sound so much resembling that of *slave*, that I thought Slavonic preferable on this account: a reason which would yield perhaps to the weightier one of correctness, if ever I should treat of the subject at length. Here, where the word is mentioned only by the way, it will be of no consequence which formation has been used.

as on account of a better knowledge of German and English; and your study of this language will give you something to laugh at. A translation of Pindar into Dutch, I think, is one of the most entertaining things one can meet with. It sounds to a German ear exceedingly laughable.*

[Do you speak most of the languages you know? I asked.]

* English and Americans are very apt to connect ideas with the word *Dutch*, and especially *Dutch language*, which strongly incline to the ridiculous, altogether forgetting that that part of the English tongue on which its strength and noble character chiefly depend, according to what all its profoundest students have declared, is the inheritance of a common stock with the Dutch—the ancient Low German. I had not found time to study Dutch, nor had my labours led me to Dutch literature; and being a native of a province in which High German is spoken, and not possessing therefore the natural key to the Dutch language—Low German, I was utterly unacquainted with Dutch. Books written in this language had now and then fallen into my hands, but I could not read them. Great, therefore, was my surprise when, one day, after I had learned English pretty thoroughly, I met with a Dutch book, and found I could read it with ease. I do not mean to intimate that an Englishman who does not know German would under-

Yes, nearly all, he replied; except the Slavonic idioms, as I told you.

[And do you never find any inconvenience from a mixture of languages of the same kind?]

Not often. I dare say it would be some time before I should be able to write correctly in Spanish. I should probably introduce many Italicisms.* Generally speaking, well educated, and especially literary people, do not mix:

stand Dutch as a matter of course; but my case shows, in a striking manner, how much nearer English is related to Dutch than German.

* When the King of Prussia visited Rome after the Congress of Verona, he had ordered the Baron Alexander de Humboldt from Paris, to accompany him through Italy. It was during this journey that I heard him say, in Mr. Niebuhr's house, that he had found considerable difficulty in speaking Italian, though he was perfectly master of it; the Spanish, in which he had written so much, and which he had spoken for many years, always mixing itself with it. Yet, before M. De Humboldt had reached Rome, this difficulty must have greatly diminished. I remember when he entered the saloon of the Prussian legation, and I saw that great man for the first time, not knowing at the time who he was: for some reason or other he thought I was an Italian, and addressed me accordingly in good Italian; I, in turn, thought he was a French gentleman, and ad-

it is the illiterate who produce the lingos by a mixture of the different languages, as well as by lowering their character. Look at the servants who come with travellers here to Rome, or read the works of literary people and transactions of common life, written in periods when two different tribes, living together, have not yet fairly intermingled. I am told the Germans in Pennsylvania mix English and German in a barbarous way.

[Mr. Niebuhr having mentioned the German spoken by the descendants of German emigrants in Pennsylvania, I had the intention of offering here some remarks on this peculiar jargon, interesting in more than one respect. I found, however, that it was impossible for me to compress them into a smaller space than eight or ten pages, which seemed to me so entirely out of proportion, that I felt constrained to retain

dressed *him* accordingly; and I was not a little surprised when at length Mr. Niebuhr entered and addressed him in German.

my observations made among the German Pennsylvanians, and the various instances I have collected to illustrate the subject, for some future occasion. The study of this barbarous dialect is of the highest interest to the student of the corruption of languages,—a subject of paramount importance to every philologist; for it is to the process of *corruption* that the study of the *formation* of most of our languages naturally leads us. By an inquiry into the German spoken in Pennsylvania, we surprise a language in that moment of transformation through which most modern European idioms have passed—a state of rude and slovenly mixture and repulsive degeneracy; for languages are like nations; rebellion and lawlessness cease to be such as soon as a new state of settled legitimacy grows out of the unsettled state of things. To the student of the English language, in particular, this degenerated daughter of the German idiom is interesting. He finds a repetition of almost every single process by which his own language

was originally formed; though these processes are, in the case of the Pennsylvanian German, often in but an incipient stage, and will never go farther, since it is impossible that this dialect can ever elevate itself to independence. It will be swallowed up before it arrives at maturity, as several concoctions of languages were in the beginning of the middle ages.]

Abuse of Power.

Whoever has power abuses it.

The same.

[On another occasion he said:]

Whoever has power abuses it; every page of history proves the fact:—individual, body, the people, it is all the same; power is abused: and yet some one or some body must have it. The great problem seems to be to vest it in such

a manner that as little mischief can be done as possible. But to effect this, something very different is necessary from merely clipping the wings of power. Injudicious restraint of power leads to as many evil consequences as unlimited power.

Importance of a good Handwriting.

A bad handwriting ought never to be forgiven;* it is a shameful indolence: indeed, sending a badly written letter to a fellow-creature is as impudent an act as I know of. Can there be anything more unpleasant than to open a letter which at once shows that it will require long deciphering? Besides, the effect of the letter is gone if we must spell it. Strange, we carefully avoid troubling other people even

* Mr. Niebuhr wrote a peculiarly legible and fair hand; an accomplishment of which not many German *savans* can boast.

with trifles, or to appear before them in dress which shows negligence or carelessness, and yet nothing is thought of giving the disagreeable trouble of reading a badly written letter. In England, good-breeding requires writing well and legibly; with us (the Germans) it seems as if the contrary principle was acknowledged.* Although many people may not have made a brilliant career by their fine handwriting, yet I know that not a few have spoiled theirs by a bad one. The most important petitions are

* Writing seems to me to be just like dressing; we ought to dress well and neat; but as we may dress too well, so may a pedantically fine hand show that the writer has thought more of the letters than the sense. It ought to be remembered, however, that it is far more difficult to write German characters well and legibly than Roman letters. Hence names in German manuscripts for printers are generally written with the latter. The English write best of all nations, using this alphabet; the Americans next. The French write in general badly, especially ladies; the Italians very poorly; and Spaniards hardly legibly, to the great confusion of their foreign commercial correspondents. It is curious to observe how the two last-named nations show by their handwriting that they have remained behind the general European civilization. They continue to use the

frequently read with no favourable disposition, or entirely thrown aside, merely because they are written so badly.

Importance of Writing at once correctly.

Endeavour never to strike out anything of what you have once written down. Punish yourself by allowing once or twice something to pass, though you see you might give it better: it will accustom you to be more careful in

contracted letters, abbreviations, and ornamental lines and flourishes, which were common with all Europeans a century ago. The art of writing has much improved during the latter centuries; compare MS. letters of the present day with those we have of the time of the Reformation. Nor does the progress of this art show less the general tendency of the times, than so many other branches of human activity, domestic comfort, &c. While the ancient expensive art of writing most beautifully and tastefully on parchment has fallen into disuse, the common handwriting of every man, for daily practical use, has vastly improved: the one, expensive and of an exclusive character, belonged to an aristocratic age; the other is characteristic of a time of popular tendency.

future; and you will not only save much time, but also think more correctly and distinctly. I hardly ever strike out or correct my writing, even in my despatches to the king. Persons who have never tried to write at once correctly, do not know how easy it is, after all, provided your thoughts are clear and well arranged; and they ought to be so before you put pen to paper.

[The reader will remember the striking coincidence between what Mr. Niebuhr says here, and what we read of Gibbon, in his "Memoirs of my Life and Writings," that he would often walk up and down in his room to round off a sentence before he attempted to write it down. Nor can I refrain from copying the following passage of the same work. Mr. Gibbon says: "I will add two facts, which have seldom occurred in the composition of six, or at least of five quartos. *My* first rough manuscript, without any intermediate copy, has been sent to the press. 2. Not a sheet has

been seen by any human eyes excepting those of the author and the printer; the faults and merits are exclusively my own."]

Napoleon's Handwriting.

The more Napoleon's power increased, the worse his handwriting became, until at last it was sometimes impossible even for his ministers to decipher it. Many a time they were greatly embarrassed, one went to the other, and none could make out his scribbling, which of course was always on the most important subjects only, and generally great haste was required in executing his orders.

Parchment.

[We had spoken of different kinds of paper:]

If I were rich, I would write on nothing but parchment; I like it exceedingly.

Michelangelo.—First King of Italy.

[We had conversed on Italy; her great destiny of being united under one government; the ardent wish of every great Italian, from the time when Dante wrote his *O Italia, di dolor ostello*, to the latest times; of Machiavelli and his proposed means of uniting Italy; of the great and various powers which would be requisite in a restorer of Italian nationality;—and I had said that, strange as it might sound, I never could read the writings of Michelangelo, or behold his works, without thinking that he was of a mould requisite for a man to become the first king of Italy.]

I am truly glad, he replied, you say so: it is my opinion too. He was a great man and a sterling man. Yes, Michelangelo would have been the man under certain circumstances; but these, of course, it is not in the power of mortal man to create.

Machiavelli.

Machiavelli, though he makes considerable mistakes in his views of early Roman history, was a great man, a wise man. His intellect was of the first class, and he knew what he was about: which, by the way, only powerful minds know, yet not all powerful minds.

Mr. Niebuhr's Parental Wish.

I wish my son to become what I could not: I will spare no exertion to give him all the advantages which I had not.

Mr. Spalding.—Niebuhr's Roman History.

Perhaps I should never have written my Roman History, had not men like Savigny and

Spalding encouraged me in the most friendly way. Spalding was one of my dearest friends. He read my manuscript; and with what pleasure have I received it back, when he approved, encouraged, and suggested improvements. I count my acquaintance with him among the happiest events in my life.

[George Luis Spalding was professor in one of the gymnasia of Berlin. He was a distinguished philologer, and died in 1811. His father, John Jochim Spalding, was one of the most meritorious and celebrated German divines. The reader will find another remark on Mr. Spalding the younger, farther below.]

Mr. Niebuhr's Roman History.

The evil time of Prussia's humiliation has some share in the production of my History. We could do little more than ardently hope for better days, and prepare for them. What was

to be done in the mean while? One must do something. I went back to a nation, great, but long passed by, to strengthen my mind and that of my hearers. We felt like Tacitus.

Advice to Young People.

[He had observed that my mind had not been cheerful for some time past, and he said:]

I believe I understand your pensiveness. My dear friend, pray to God: "I will keep thy commands, give me tranquillity in return." A kind Providence will not refuse so simple a prayer. It is not the destiny of men of your cast of mind to go quietly on the path of faith from childhood to old age. You must struggle, but be not afraid. Many before you have had to pass through the same struggle. Keep your mind active and your soul pure, and all will come right. Whatever aspect the world around you may have, keep steadily to

the love of truth. You could not help becoming old before your age; but there are at present many, it seems to me, who wantonly lose their youth, and trouble their minds with cares and griefs of which they know nothing but the name. The vigour of manhood depends much upon a healthy and natural, not premature state of mind in youth.

Signs of the rapid Flight of Time.

[Mr. Niebuhr had asked me whether I had read a certain book, I forget what; and on my answer in the negative, said:]

Nothing, indeed, shows me so strikingly that I belong to a generation which is fast to be supplanted by a succeeding one, as the fact that books, which were the rage when I was young, are not known by men of your age. By the opinion in which some works, published when I was young, are held by your generation, I am already enabled to compare my criticism

of the literature of my younger days with the opinion of posterity.

[The faster books are published, the sooner this forerunner of the criticism takes place. In various respects it seemed to me necessary to "keep up" with the literature of the day; but books of the lighter kind have become so numerous that it is utterly impossible to read everything besides one's serious and official studies. I have therefore contrived the following means. I allow always half a year to pass after the publication of a work, if the name of its author is not a sufficient guarantee to make me at once read it. If the book is still spoken of after the lapse of this period, and if I am still asked, "Have you read such or such a book?" I read it: thus I make time criticise for me; and the reader has no idea how much trouble I am spared. I gain by not losing time; and I gain by not being obliged to glance at a large mass of books which come and go like moths and flies.]

Mr. Niebuhr's Memory.

[When I had just returned from Greece, and described certain spots to him, he would ask for by-ways, remains of wells, paths over high ridges, or other minute details, as if he had been there. As many of the objects for which he asked exist still, and I had seen them, I was amazed at his accurate knowledge.]

Oh, said he, I never forget anything I once have seen, read, or heard.*

France a Republic.

Only those who do not know anything of history, or have never observed and studied republics now in existence, can have for a mo-

* Instances of the extraordinary memory of Mr. Niebuhr have been given in the preface. It would be easy for me to add a number here.

ment the idea that France can become a republic. There is not one of the many necessary materials for building a republic in France. It is utterly impossible; yet there are some crazy brains who wish for a French republic in good faith; many of those who pretend to believe in it know much better.

Parties in France.

I think matters stand very badly in France; neither the one nor the other party allows of any cheerful prospect. The Royalists sometimes act as if they were mad; and in the Opposition are distinguished men, who have spent their whole life in contradiction to the principles they pretend to avow. Their boldness, at least, must be admired. Men who have driven the people at home and in foreign countries to despair, pretend to be Liberals now! But so little are things remembered! I dare

say few people recollect how infamously some, who now figure as the foremost in the Liberal ranks, behaved among us (Germans). You know very well that there was no greater leech, and more oppressive instrument of tyranny among the French, than———, when *Intendant de la Mark de Brandenbourg*, and now he is a great and noisy Liberal. He has excused himself by the old adage, that it was not he, but his orders, that were oppressive:—it is not true. Why have other servants of Napoleon, equally strict in executing the ruinous orders of their regardless master, acted differently? Surely, they could bring no happy times to our poor people either; but they showed, at least, that they had a heart; and so essentially good-natured is the German, that this was always acknowledged with gratitude. He, however, used to say to those who made the most earnest representations, "In half a century the country will have recovered, and no trace of suffering be left."——, in Holland, used

to say, "*Que fait cela à l'Empereur!*". The people were galled to their heart's core. The French have shown a most decided trait during the time of their conquests, namely—avarice. I speak of all, from the highest to the lowest; their greediness for money was disgusting. You were too young at that time to know many details, but I know them. The many contrivances they would resort to, in order to extort money, would appear now almost incredible. Other nations have not shown this trait of meanness during their conquests. They have always levied contributions; and the English in India were certainly not over-delicate, but it was not done in so mean a way, and by every one in his sphere. How much we have often laughed, bitter as the times were, when some of the high-sounding proclamations and bulletins of Napoleon were issued, and all the French were made to appear in them the purest knights, full of honour and devotion to a great cause,

and we compared these trumpet-sounds to reality. They were essentially mean, and of course without the slightest shame. There were, as you know, exceptions. How differently have our generals acted in France!

Opinion of Pius VII. of Prince Hohenlohe.

The Pope (Pius VII.) one day speaking to me of Prince Hohenlohe, said, *Questo far dei miracoli?* followed by a very significant shake of his head, expressive of strong doubt.*

* Alexander Leopold, Prince Hohenlohe, now canon at Grosswardein, in Hungary, has acquired great reputation by his miracles. Those which he effected at a distance by appointing a precise time when the afflicted person and he pray at the minute, the necessary deduction on account of different degrees of longitude always being made, have attracted most attention. Prince Hohenlohe had been in Rome, where his demeanour seems to have betrayed to Pius VII. so little of true apostolic humbleness, that he was far from believing in the miracles when they were reported in Rome.

The Pope's interest in the labours of Mr. Niebuhr.—His blessing.

The Pope (Pius VII.) seems to take great pleasure in talking to me of my investigations in the Vatican, and never does it without remembering the time when he was professor of Greek. Perhaps he feels more at ease with me than with the Catholic ambassadors. Whenever he can, he stops me after an audience to talk to him a little. He seems to me an exceedingly good and pious man: I feel real reverence for him. I once presented my Marcus to him; and in giving him his blessing, he said with a most venerable smile, "The blessing of an old man won't do him any harm."*

* Bourienne, in his Life of Napoleon Bonaparte, relates a similar anecdote of Pius VII. when he visited the imperial printing-press in Paris, a few days before the coronation of Napoleon. It is very possible that the benevolent Pius said these kindly words by way of quotation, since it is related that they were first used by a Pope who saw an Englishman exposed to the fury of the populace, as he would not kneel down when the pontiff passed. "Kneel

Citron sent by the Pope.

Look here, my young friend, Mr. Niebuhr said one day, the Pope has sent me a basket full of citrons produced in his garden. I shall have them boiled in sugar and send them to my Catholic friends in Berlin. How they will enjoy it! what a feast it will be for the little ones of ——!

down, my son," were the words with which the Pope is said to have addressed the Englishman, "an old man's blessing won't harm thee anyhow." The same anecdote is reported of Sir Horace Walpole and Pope Benedict XVI. (Lambertini). The former paid his visit to the head of the Catholic church when his father was premier of England: he hesitated to kneel down, as it might have given rise to rumours not agreeable to his father, the great Whig minister; and the Pope, observing his hesitation, is said to have found this admirable way of avoiding the difficulty, by offering the blessing as an old man only, and not in his ecclesiastic capacity. The custom may have been different from what it is now: at present, no Protestant is expected to kneel before the Pope. Mr. Niebuhr, the minister of a Protestant monarch, bent his knee but slightly when he paid his respects to the Pope in official audiences —a way of approaching monarchs which was formerly common, and is still in use in several countries. At pre-

Mr. Niebuhr's Father.—Franklin.

[I had read Mr. Niebuhr's Life of his Father,* and said: "Your father seems to me somewhat like Franklin;" alluding merely to their simplicity and inexhaustible activity and desire for accurate knowledge.]

Indeed? said he, quite astonished; there was no cunning in my father. On the contrary, my father was an extremely simple-hearted man. I cannot see the similarity. My father had no worldly shrewdness.

[I explained myself, and he seemed to agree with me.]

sent, when a number of persons, Catholics and Protestants, are presented to the Pope,—for instance, the officers of an American man-of-war,—the Catholics are requested to write down their names previous to the audience. They are received first, and admitted to the usual ceremony of kissing the cross on the Pope's slipper, and receiving his blessing. Protestants approach as they would to any other sovereign.

* Since translated into English, and published in one of the numbers of the Library of Useful Knowledge, published under the direction of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge.

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Henry IV. of France.

[I had asked him whether he did not believe that Henry IV. might have done wonders for France and all Europe, and saved his native country from revolution, had he supported the people in their desire of establishing Protestantism — a question arising from a want of sufficient knowledge of that period:]

Do you believe so? he said: I doubt it very much indeed; but I am not sufficiently master of the French history of that time.

[He said this with ineffable simplicity and modesty, without the least apparent intention of making me reflect upon the scantiness of my knowledge.]

Authority of Law among the Romans.

The meaning which the word *law* had among the Romans, and the obedience paid to this

abstract authority, are historical traits of that great nation. They are quite peculiar to them in antiquity; and in modern times comparable only to the civil spirit of the English and their children in America.

Athens.—Sparta.

The ancient philosophers praised the aristocratic constitutions of Sparta; but really I prefer ten times over all the Athenian licentiousness, bad as it really was, to the order of Lacedæmon. What have they done or produced, except some noble instances of self-devotion? They are noble, to be sure; but if a country produces nothing but this readiness in sacrificing one's self, it seems to be something very negative. It is easy in this life to sacrifice everything to a single object, as all the human faculties in all their variety and activity nearly, were sacrificed to the single object of making Sparta a warlike

state: but the difficulty is to find out systems in which all the different parts have their proper sphere assigned them. And yet, (he added after a pause,) Sparta forms after all a beautiful part of the whole picture of favoured Greece.

Hypocritical Critics.

[We had conversed on some silly remarks made in a public paper on his Roman History, charging him with scepticism, and made in a tone which betrayed but too openly that the writer wished to infuse into his criticism the accusation of infidelity, though he had not the boldness to do so.]

There was a time, Mr. Niebuhr said, when a man might well have feared for his liberty, and perhaps for his life too, had he dared to assert what I have stated. The philologists would have cried treason, and the theologians

would have considered it an attack upon themselves. Public opinion would have stoned him. And even now there are a great many people who dare not express what they think upon this point, because they feel that they would render themselves ridiculous.

[I said, that I actually had seen an article against Wolf's substituting several Homeric poets for one Homer, winding up with a declaration that, if this theory were allowed to pass, no safety would any longer exist for the Mosaic writings, and we should soon see a number of Mosaic writers substituted for the one deliverer of the Hebrews. It was an English article which had resorted to this kind of reasoning backwards, so common among the enemies of calm and manly search for truth. I added: "It is very true, I never shall forget my feelings when the results of Wolf's inquiries were first explained to us in school. It was the feeling of real grief. I had lost a beau-ideal: the blind, inspired, venerated rhapsodist was gone."]

Well, said Mr. Niebuhr, and you know that he was very furiously attacked by some philologists as a barbarian, destroying one of the finest images we had of antiquity. I understand what you felt perfectly well. I felt the same; but truth remains truth, and certainly you would not wish me to withhold results at which I believe I have properly arrived. It appeared to many much more delightful to imagine a separate deity guarding every tree, every flower to be sacred to another god, than to believe in one God ruling over all and every thing: should they have rejected him because this belief destroyed the dreams of their childhood? Nothing in this world is easier than to enlist a common and popular prejudice against a man. Be always extremely careful whenever you hear a universal cry against a man for having stated something in religious or scientific matters. As for the fear of criticism, it only shows weakness. I never yet have found a man who feels perfectly secure in his

belief, that shuns inquiry into the Bible. At any rate, such attacks as those against Wolf or myself, come with very bad grace from Protestants.

[Truth, I replied, seems to be considered by many people like a thing — something without them—an apple they may eat or not; but not as the one great object of all life and existence—the absorbing duty of man,—that, in searching which, we alone approach God !]

Very often, he rejoined, speaks egotism, which does not wish to be disturbed; or littleness of mind, which has not the courage to acknowledge a long-cherished error; or interest, when endeavours are made to make us believe that a holy zeal alone prompts the persecutor.

The Romans essentially Farmers.

It is a very great mistake to consider the Romans as exclusively a warlike people. They

were essentially farmers; they loved farming, and their greatest men paid much attention to it. This circumstance must always be remembered in studying Roman history: it alone explains a variety of phenomena in their political developement. My knowledge of country life and farming, as well as my acquaintance with the history of the Ditmarsians, have greatly assisted me in my historical inquiries. Those Ditmarsians were a very peculiar race — as gallant lovers of liberty as ever existed.

The same.

[When I travelled with him through the Campagna Felice and in Upper Italy, he often exclaimed:]

There, see, what excellent farmers these Italians are; how they cultivate their fields with the care of gardeners! It was always so: Romans loved farming.

Waste of Time.

People had formerly much more time than we have: only consider all the time eaten up by morning calls and evening parties. I speak of the scholars by profession. Otherwise they could not have written so many folios and quartos.

Metaphysics.

I take peculiar care that metaphysics do not infuse themselves into my study of history. It ought to be possible that two scholars, adhering to two totally different philosophical systems, should arrive at the same results as to the historical growth and unfolding of a nation.

The same.

I have given up reading metaphysical books.

Jacobi.

Jacobi was an uncommonly pure man. He always appeared to me like a being from a better sphere, tarrying only for a short time among us. It is well that such beings appear here from time to time; they encourage poor mortals.*

* Frederick Henry Jacobi was a distinguished German philosopher. The Encyclopædia Americana says of him: —"Jacobi's works are rich in whatever can attract elevated souls, yet the opinions respecting him are very different. He has been called the German Plato, on account of the religious glow in his metaphysical writings; but, whatever opinions may be entertained respecting his philosophy, all admit that he was a most exemplary man, truly revered by all who had the good fortune to be acquainted with him. His philosophy, among other traits, is characterised by an aversion to systems, all of which, he maintains, when consistently carried out, lead to fanaticism."

Mr. Niebuhr's intercourse with other scholars.

In that bitter time of oppression by the French, we had a philologic circle in Berlin: Schleiermacher, Buttmann, Boeckh, were members. We improved much by each other; and how delightful were those evenings! We informed, encouraged, rectified, enlivened each other.

[As to Schleiermacher and Buttmann I am sure I am correct; and I think I made no mistake, at the time I wrote down this aphorism, when I placed the name of that distinguished philologer, Mr. Boeckh, with the two others. Whether Mr. Niebuhr mentioned also Spalding, I do not recollect.—I may be permitted to copy the end of the preface of Mr. Niebuhr's History:

" Therefore do I bless the beloved memory of my departed Spalding; therefore, too, allow me openly to express my thanks to you, Sa-

vigny, Buttmann, and Heindorf, without whom, and without our deceased friend, I should certainly never have had the courage to undertake this work; without whose affectionate sympathy and enlivening presence it would hardly have been accomplished."

Schleiermacher writes, in the preface to the first edition of his masterly translation of Plato, dated April 1804, "I am obliged for essential assistance in the translation to my friends C. L. Spalding and L. F. Heindorf, in respect to finding out that which is correct, as well as to preventing mistakes."]

The Vatican.

There are immense treasures in the Vatican; but it is impossible to make proper use of them. I am now favoured by Majo, at least as much as any one; but it is not to be compared to other libraries. There is an ill-placed jealousy

all the time fettering the student, and very unbecoming so noble an institution. Besides, the time allowed to work there is much too short.

Caliphs.

It was a grand idea, indeed, on which the ancient Arabian law was founded, that no caliph should have the right to spend more than he could earn by the labour of his hands. Besides this, the fifth part of the booty belonged to him: but in those times of Arabian greatness, a caliph would have been considered very mean who did not again distribute his share. At present, they generally sell their handywork at enormous prices: it often ruins a man to be singled out by a dey for the peculiar grace of being allowed to buy the work of the ruler.

Sclavonic.

I think the old Sclavonic language, as spoken in Servia, is the most perfect of the living European languages: it has quite the honesty and power of the German language, and a philosophical grammar. The Russians used to laugh at me when they found me studying the Sclavonic languages; so little are they yet a nation as not to love their vernacular tongue.

The idea of Impurity attached to Woman.

[I had read in the church of Santa Praxede, in Rome, a prohibition against one of the chapels, in which there are preserved two saints, and a piece of the column to which Christ was tied when flagellated, to this effect—*E defesò a tutte le donne di entrare in questa santissima capella sotto pena di scomonanza:* and when I asked

the sexton for the reason, he said, "Because it is a very holy chapel." I told this to Mr. Niebuhr, and he said, shrugging his shoulders :]

That has passed down from paganism with many similar notions. Women, you know, were prohibited from entering many temples in antiquity; and to this day, in Asia, is the idea of impurity attached, in a great degree, to woman. The placing of wax images of ears, eyes, and limbs, on the altar of a saint, is quite an antique custom. Bishops have sometimes felt obliged to prohibit this peculiar kind of devotion, when things were demanded from the patron saints, or the Virgin, which ill accorded with religious purity.

Palladiums.

I have to send a Palladium to Prussia; it costs at present two hundred scudi; in the middle ages it cost about fifteen hundred. It

may be taken as an index of the value the people put upon papal authority; for money, as you well know, has greatly sunk in value.

Battle at Weissenberg.

Had the battle at Weissenberg not been lost, Venice would have become Protestant: she was on the point of becoming so. The consequences which this fact would have produced are incalculable.

Fra Paolo.

Fra Paolo is one of the finest and greatest characters that ever lived.

Influence of Religion in Ancient and Modern Rome.

[We walked together, and read the following words written on a church : " *Indulgentia plenaria quotidiana vivis defunctisque* ;" and I observed *en passant*, " If Scipio had seen this !"]

Yes, replied Mr. Niebuhr ; and yet the Romans were always a people paying great respect to religious authority. There is a more natural connexion between what we have just read and the times to which you allude, than you probably are aware of. The pontifex was always a most important person ; and the very expression of *sanctioning* laws, that is, making them holy, or stamping them with sacred authority, shows the political importance of religion in ancient Rome.

[In fact, the very word *religion* indicates the powerful *binding* influence it had with the Romans.]

Loss of the Mexican Literature.

What an immense treasure for the history of civilization has been lost for ever by the order of the first bishop in Mexico, to burn the whole native literature! Perhaps a greater one than by Omar's conflagration. No greater loss has ever happened.

Punishment of Death for not being victorious.

Admiral Byng was shot for having avoided the enemy, instead of having attacked them. He was executed for cowardice. However, he was perhaps sacrificed by the ministry. Venice punished the general who had not been victorious. The ancients, it is well known, were often not less exacting; the behaviour of the Athenians is well known; and perhaps France would not have avoided an invasion in the time

of the Republic, had not the only question with the generals been—either victory or your head flies off.

Spiritual Exercises.

Esercizj spirituali are spiritual exercises dictated by the *Offizio* for minor offences, mostly performed in a convent, where people remain sometimes a week or a fortnight. At times they are very proper; at others not. All professors of the Propaganda and Sapienza, all priests, physicians, superintendents of archives, and people of the kind, who had taken the oath of allegiance to the French, were obliged to expiate their offence by such penances. Some professors had to ascend the *Scala Santa** (in the Lateran) on their knees.

* La Scala Santa, close by the Lateran, is believed by the faithful to be the steps of the palace of Pilate, carried from Jerusalem to Rome. The blood of the Saviour fell on them, and they are held in so great veneration, that none

Chronicle of Cologne.

The chronicle of Cologne, which goes down to 1400, is perhaps the best German chronicle.

Land-owners near Albano.—Joseph in Egypt.

[When I lived with the minister and his family in Albano, passing the hottest time of the month of August in that lovely place, I once walked with him and his son to Lariccia. The relation of the actual cultivator of the soil to the owner, was invariably a subject of deep interest to the great historian. He said:]

This charming country does not belong to the inhabitants of any of these houses you see

ascends them but on the knees. The concourse of the devout has been so great at all times, that these marble steps have been worn out several times, and it has been found necessary to cover the original stairs with large flag-stones.

around you; they have but a very small share of the produce for their labour. Lariccia* was once rich, but a devastating famine raged here in the middle ages, and the poor inhabitants, to save their lives, were obliged to sell the land they owned to the family of the Savelli. They received grain, and retained but a pitiful share of the produce. Only four families of Lariccia escaped and remained freeholders. The property of the Savelli passed into the hands of the powerful family of the Chigi, who soon after absorbed the property of the four remaining land-owners; and thus this whole charming Vallariccia belongs at present to the Chigi. The history of Joseph, as given in the forty-seventh chapter of Genesis, is a most dangerous precedent for an artful premier: "Give me thy land and liberty, and I give thee bread." I dare say it was resorted to when the bargain was made with the starving Lariccians.

* Lariccia is the ancient famous Aricia.

Greek Revolution.—Great requisites of a Liberator.

[One day we spoke, as we frequently did, of Greece, of her doubtful fate, and how beautiful her destiny might be.]

I know, said Mr. Niebuhr, that the whole revolution broke out too soon, and against the wish of the best leaders of the whole affair. Nothing is so difficult in matters of this kind as to have the rare moral power of waiting, and also the penetration and character to say—"Now is the time." Besides, it is hardly ever possible to keep from the best planned mines political clowns, who put the match to them, or make them otherwise explode, before the proper moment. Then is the time to show the man; and few of those who plan most judiciously, are possessed of that combination of powers which invents at the instant new means

for every new emergency. This requires not only political wisdom, but political genius.

Ali Pacha's Courage.

Ali Pacha was the most courageous man of the age. In every moment of his life he was himself.

[Is it not difficult, I observed, to designate him as the most courageous man of his time? How could this be ascertained? However, let us compare him to some one; to Napoleon, for instance: Do you believe him firmer than Napoleon?]

I do, he replied. You may imagine that I do not believe the foolish stories of Napoleon's cowardice; but I do believe that Ali Pacha would not have turned pale, had he, instead of Napoleon, entered the Legislative Hall on the 18th of Brumaire.

Count Deserre.

[Mr. Niebuhr felt the most lively esteem for Count Deserre, keeper of the seals of France during the administration of the Duke of Decazes: an intimate friendship existed between both. He said once to me:]

Count Deserre is the deepest reflecting Frenchman I know. He reminds me of that by-gone French race of grave, thinking men, who seem to have become extinct with the night of St. Bartholomew. I feel a real love for that man.

Visit to Pompeii with Count Deserre.

[Mr. Niebuhr saw Count Deserre frequently during our visit to Naples, where the latter was then French ambassador. Both the families visited Pompeii together. When we were

walking through the ashes, up to our ancles, Mr. Niebuhr said:]

"It must be acknowledged, that had Joseph remained here, we should be able to see more of the ancient city, and probably walk more comfortably."

"Undoubtedly," answered the Count; "but I should not have the rare pleasure of walking with you here."

Klopstock.—Count Deserre's knowledge of him.

[Count Deserre, born in 1774, was very young when, in 1791, he emigrated. He was obliged to support himself by keeping school in a town in Suabia,—Biberach, if my memory does not deceive me, — where he made himself perfectly acquainted with German literature, which he continued to study in Hamburgh, where Napoleon had appointed him president of the court of appeal, after that Hanse town had been

declared a *bonne ville* of the *grand empire.* Conversing, on our excursion to Pompeii, of German authors, it was observed that few Germans ever read the whole Messiah, as the Paradise Lost is known by but few English.]

"There," said Mr. Niebuhr to Count Deserre, "put my young friend here to the blush, and recite a passage of Klopstock. I dare say he has not read it. I should be surprised if he had."

I answered, that "I must ask his pardon, though I would frankly admit that probably I should not have read the whole had I not been in prison, where I found time to read a number of authors until then neglected by me."

"But can you recite a passage?" replied Mr. Niebuhr; and he himself quoted a pretty long one.

Count Deserre then followed, and pronounced an equally long one; while I could do nothing but repeat the first six or eight hexameters, and feel ashamed.

The French.

"I believe," said Mr. Niebuhr to Count Deserre, "that few things would have a more salutary effect upon the French nation than a return to a very careful and thorough study of philology and antiquity. It would contribute to steady them and make them honour history; and, therefore, to consider themselves more as but one link in the great chain of nations."

"Yes," said the Count, "it would somewhat lead off our minds from eternal schemes, and would induce people not to seek everything in futurity."

Napoleon, and the Triumphal March of Alexander, by Thorwaldsen.

[Mr. Niebuhr told Count Deserre, that Thorwaldsen had executed his beautiful Triumphal

March of Alexander, in bas-relief, in an almost incredibly short time, for the reception of Napoleon on his visit to Rome, in one of the rooms of the Papal palace.]

"For so it was ordered," continued Mr. Niebuhr; "and it might be a question whether Thorwaldsen would have produced so noble a piece of work, had he not been obliged to create forthwith and for *him*. His energy was concentrated."

"It was this concentration of energy in others," replied Count Deserre, "in which Napoleon was so great a master. No man ever understood so thoroughly the great secret of making every one work and produce. High or low, politician or artist, it was all the same; he made every one exert himself to the utmost of his ability. He made the whole world march, and march according to his plans."

Small Houses in Antiquity.

[Conversing in Pompeii on the limited space of the houses and temples, and the actually diminutive dimensions of apartments, Count Deserre had observed, that the ancients could have had no great idea of domestic comfort. Mr. Niebuhr replied:]

Our ideas of time and space are quite relative. All their distances were smaller than ours, at least at those times when the style in which these houses were built originated.

[I asked whether there was not another reason perhaps to be found in this, that absolutism, or unbounded power, delights in vast dimensions, as Asia and the palaces of imperial Rome testify, while a civic spirit produces smaller buildings?]

Certainly, said Mr. Niebuhr: look at the small houses and rooms in England. This, however, does not apply to the huts of the actually oppressed.

[Were my object to give my views, I would extend, as well as modify, my remark; but it is to give what Mr. Niebuhr said.]

Domestication of the Lazzaroni.

It was a wise measure of the French administration in Naples to give work to the Lazzaroni, and to pay them partly in money, partly in household utensils, especially mattresses and things of that kind. Domesticate a man, and you civilize him. Some, probably, sold their mattresses and continued to sleep in their baskets, but some did not. A mattress induced them to buy a bed, to sleep in a room, to provide some more furniture—in fact, to become *domestic** in the true sense of the word.

* The English reader must here remember that the word *domestic* is derived from *domus*, house. The German word which Mr. Niebuhr used was *häuslich*, from *haus*, house, literally translated *housish*, if such a word might be formed.

Joseph Bonaparte's Government in Naples.

Historical facts must be acknowledged;——, who knows more about the whole government of Naples than perhaps any one else, says, that Joseph Bonaparte's government would have given a great *élans* to the arts and sciences, trade and everything, and would have established honesty in the administration—*si cela est possible* in this country, he added, shrugging his shoulders.

Influence of the Crown.

A constitutional monarchy cannot get along without a considerable influence in the popular branch of the representatives.

Pisa.

Pisa gives the student of the middle ages in Italy those clear perceptions which Pompeii affords to the student of antiquity.

Clausura of Convents.

[Mr. Niebuhr, his son Marcus, and myself, visited a convent, the monks of which appeared greatly alarmed from suspecting little Marcus to be a girl; owing, probably, to his long and blond ringlets. They hesitated giving us permission to enter; and when they would not even trust Mr. Niebuhr's positive assurance that the individual in question was a boy, he said, with a somewhat sarcastic smile,]

Pray, how do your consciences get over the female fleas, which, I dare say, are in goodly abundance in your convent?

[The ever ready, *Ah! che vuol' che dica?* was here also the answer. However, the permission was granted. On our way home, Mr. Niebuhr said:]

You smiled at my remark about the fleas: well, do you know that many convents exclude female cats as within the clausura? However, something may be said in favour of excluding domestic animals of different sexes from a community, the character of which is intended to be essentially contemplative.

Measures which would promote the cultivation of the soil in many parts of Italy.

[During our residence in Albano we visited the Rotunda. Mr. Niebuhr believed an antique wall to have been built by Domitian for an encampment of the Germans. We then saw the church of St. Paul—a convent of missionaries, where Mr. Niebuhr said:]

Two measures would very rapidly and essentially promote the welfare of Italy: if the largest land-owners—for instance here, the Princes Chigi—were obliged to rent out the greater part of their estates as fee-farms, so that the cultivator might become again, in part at least, the owner of the land; and if permission were granted to every inmate of a convent to leave it with an appropriate pension for life. Wherever all the members of a convent should agree to avail themselves of this permission, a capital might be created out of the property of the convent, part of which might be appropriated for the support of the monks; to whom, nevertheless, the hope ought to be held out, that they would place themselves in a still better situation by some useful employment,—for instance, as teachers, as assistants in hospitals, or printing-offices of government. The rest of the convent's property ought in such cases to be made at once productive. But no robbing on the side of government, no mere swallowing up of all this

valuable property by the treasury,—in short, no *confiscation!* On the contrary, its wise appropriation ought to form at once a part of this system of secularisation, which in course of time must take place: for it cannot be supposed that Italy will be for ever deprived of her prosperity by this immense waste. Convents have done much good, and were once quite according to the spirit and even the wants of the age; but times change. What is wise to-day may be the contrary a hundred years hence. Some convents need not be dissolved.

Mr. Niebuhr does not want a title of Nobility.

I have been asked whether I wish for a title of nobility. I never could bring myself to accept of such an offer. I should feel as if I were insulting the memory of my father, whom I am far from resembling.

Thorwaldsen.

Thorwaldsen has not that plastic certainty or firmness which distinguishes the ancients in so high a degree. You can see in Thorwaldsen that he works from without; you see but the surface. It is different with the works of the ancient masters; they look as if they had grown from within.*

[I answered:—I am sorry my feeling is in this case so directly opposite to yours. But yesterday I saw again Thorwaldsen's incomparable Shepherd-Boy and his Graces; and in looking at them it became suddenly clear to me how the ancient artist fell in love with the

* That I give this sentiment of Mr. Niebuhr merely with a view more accurately to characterize him, not Mr. Thorwaldsen, is clear. I have given already in the preface my opinion with regard to Mr. Niebuhr's sensibility in the sphere of the fine arts. It may be interesting to us to know the opinion of a Napoleon on Homer, in order to judge the hero; but his praise can hardly enhance our veneration for the poem.

work of his own hand, and prayed to the gods to breathe life into it. I felt a shudder after contemplating those heavenly images, when I thought that they were but of stone, subject to every mechanical law which physical nature has to obey. I cannot help declaring, at the risk of being thought a heretic, that some works of Thorwaldsen's, among which I count the Shepherd-Boy, seem to me equal to the most perfect sculptures of antiquity. At the same time, it is Thorwaldsen through whom I have become initiated in the ancient art. I have often gone with delight through the Vatican—a delight I had never experienced before, and how differently appeared to me all these witnesses of ancient perfection after I had understood Thorwaldsen! At least, I hope and feel I have understood him.

All Mr. Niebuhr replied, was:]

And would you say the same of Canova?

[Certainly not, I said.]

Character of Napoleon.

[I had returned from a visit to the Capitol, and remarked how much I had been struck with the resemblance of the mouth, chin, and cheek of the colossal head of Claudius, to the corresponding parts of Napoleon; and that it had surprised me how all the Caracallas, Domitians, &c. had the large round chin of Napoleon.]

Nevertheless, Mr. Niebuhr said, Napoleon was not cruel. He would not indeed hesitate to sacrifice human life in order to obtain his political objects; but he had no pleasure in destroying it, still less in inflicting pain: nor would he inflict death for mere vengeance; though I believe it cost him but little to order any sacrifice if he thought it necessary. In his character there prevailed too much of an iron will to hesitate in such a case.

Emigrés.

I recollect, when Napoleon permitted the emigrants to return, my friends whom I had among them would ask me how I thought it would agree with their duty were they to make use of the permission. I invariably told them that they ought to return: whoever ruled, usurper or not, France was their country, and to France they ought to return. The English have proper views respecting the new governments and dynasties.

Napoleon.

Napoleon knew how to break men like dogs. He would trample upon them, and again show them a piece of bread and pat them, so that they came frisking to him: and no monarch ever had so many absolute instruments of his absolute

will as Napoleon. I do not speak only of his immediate servants; princes and sovereigns showed themselves equally well broken.

Martyrs.

[We visited the Temple of Claudius, or the Church of St. Stefano Rotondo, where Pomarancio and Antonio Tempesta have tried their skill and ingenuity in painting all varieties of martyrdom.]

The martyrs, Mr. Niebuhr observed, were tortured enough, but most of these representations are fictions. So much for history; and as to the fine arts, the disgusting is certainly not their sphere.

An antique Knife of Stone.

[During our residence in Albano, he had heard that an ancient knife, made of stone, had

been found near Cori, the ancient Cora, the town of Latium, on the confines of the Volsci, which the reader will remember having frequently found mentioned in Mr. Niebuhr's History. He asked me whether I would get it for him; and I sallied forth on horseback, with my gun across the saddle, as if I was making an excursion in Greece. The country was unsafe at that time, and my way lay through the mountains, off the main road. Desirous as Mr. Niebuhr was of obtaining the knife, he hesitated when I came to take leave, and I had to persuade him to let me go. I was obliged to pay a high price for the antique knife, as the peasant who had found it, near the Temple of Hercules on Corimonte, easily saw that I had come, for the purpose of buying his knife, from a considerable distance. I had to ask my landlord for this peasant, and my errand was soon known all over the little place. When I returned from my journey through a most interesting part of classical country, on which I fain would dwell

longer, did not the length of this preamble already far exceed the space which the remark of Mr. Niebuhr will occupy, he was much pleased with the spoil, and said :]

This knife was used only for sacrifices after the conclusion of peace. It is very old. Never mind the price; with me these things have somewhat the value of relics; I am glad you have got it.

Monte Cavo.

[I ascended Monte Cavo with him; I enjoyed that vast and instructive view with Mr. Niebuhr. What I enjoyed, and saw, and learned from that spot, is strongly engraven in my mind. My eyes—and I have the fortune of possessing peculiarly good ones—swept over that extensive plain, of which every part is of deep classical interest; for here it is where giant Rome, which ruled the universe, and still affects

the life and thought of every one of us, was reared. The dark blue ocean, calm, placid, pure, and unaffected by all the ages that have passed over its waves, told, like a great witness, of the early bards inspired by its dangers and its beauties; of the Roman fleets sent to Carthage or to Spain; of the Saracens, who landed and plundered here; and of all deeds down to the latest times, when the British hero of the sea flew from isle to isle, and shore to shore, as if these waters with all their winds were his domain. When, too, I saw the distant islands, and even that of Giglio,* I could not help breaking forth in words which expressed how powerfully history, Nature, his presence, the lovely child, the convent where Jupiter had once his temple, the traces of early ingenuity — of ages long, long past, the road still in good order, though made thousands of years ago—how powerfully all this affected me. Here, said I, a historian must feel his vocation, or never; and here too,

* The ancient Igilium.

or nowhere, man must feel humble. The monk who pointed out to us the different distant objects said, that on peculiarly favourable days Corsica and Sardinia could be discerned in the light of the setting sun. Mr. Niebuhr's pleasure was exceedingly great, and only diminished by not being able to see as far as I could. I think the passage in his History, where he speaks of Alba, and the sight from the top of this mountain, and the ancient works near it, bears the stamp of his feelings when on this spot; though he had to restrain them by that calmness of style which is necessary for a work describing the history of a nation, and not the feelings and experience of an individual.* We remained a long time at this sacred place, and I remember that he repeatedly said, Could I but borrow your eyes!]

Indeed, said he, this spot is noble; and I should be willing to give much to have enjoyed

* See Niebuhr's History of Rome, English translation, vol. i. pages 168 and 169.

the view from Acrocorinth as you describe it.* Views of this kind are exceedingly instructive; and they correct the image always formed in our minds of countries and places of which we read or hear much. I wish, however, I had your eyes.

[I asked him whether he had met with the same difficulty that I had frequently found in Greece, of impressing the real topographic picture of a country on my mind without any admixture of that image which I had previously formed—contracted, I might almost say: for so vividly was I impressed with the representations of certain places and territories of antiquity, as well as of modern times, before I had seen them, merely from reading or hearing often of them, that I actually had found it difficult, in some cases, entirely to erase the pre-

* In my Journal during my stay in Greece mentioned in a note to the preface. A translation of the passage alluded to in the text appeared in "The Stranger in America," quite at the end of the work.

vious image, and to substitute for it the correct one obtained by personal observation.]

I have experienced this difficulty in a degree, but by no means so much as you have, for your imagination is much livelier. It is one of the drawbacks you people with an active imagination have for the pleasures you derive from the same source.

[It would be difficult indeed, I observed, to decide on which side, in the end, the balance sinks—the scale of pleasure or pain.]

A lively imagination is a great gift, Mr. Niebuhr said, provided early education tutors it. If not, it is nothing but a soil equally luxuriant for all kinds of seeds.

[It is my habit to make on spots, such as that on which we then were, panoramic *croquis;* that is to say, I draw the prominent objects around me as they present themselves with regard to situation in this half perspective, half bird's-eye view. I have found them most valuable memoranda for my Journal; and when I made one on

this spot, Mr. Niebuhr very much approved this way of *writing down* a vast view.]

The Fall of Prussia.

[The same day, when we ascended the mountain in the morning on our asses, we saw oak-trees, which, by a series of associations, led him to tell me the following simple anecdote:]

When, after the battle of Jena, everything seemed to be lost for Prussia, I one day, on my journey to Königsberg, talked with the coachman, an old peasant, on the deplorable state of things. "Well," said the peasant, "I don't know how it is; that battle of Jena is but one battle, after all; and I have never yet felled a sound old oak with one blow. It cannot be all lost." Had but all thought like this peasant, it might have ended differently.

[If all had thought like the peasant, the oak would have been sound; but that the tree fell

by one stroke, is the very proof that the oak was not sound.]

Canova.

[A *gentiluomo* of the Papal court, dressed in black, with a sword, informed the minister of the death of Canova. I happened to be present; Mr. Niebuhr said:]

There is one good man less! Canova was an excellent man, liberal in a rare degree, kind, without envy or jealousy, faithful, pious, and of a reflecting mind withal. He felt a true attachment to Pius VII. which was probably increased by the misfortunes of the pope and his dignified demeanour in affliction. Canova would speak of him with a warmth which was truly edifying. I like his idea of making a picture for the church of the little village of his birth. Don't you believe that such a work will of itself give certain moral *élans* to the whole

little Possagno? It will raise the *morale* of the village; it establishes a visible connexion between the people of that obscure place and a gifted and successful man, which is leaving a great legacy. So are public statues of great moral value; they excite, remind, teach: how very superficial are those who think they are but proofs of overwrought gratitude or flattery! To be sure, they have been abused—what has not? Canova was ever ready to assist and guide young artists; and his idea of establishing prizes for the most successful among them was excellent.

[This latter observation may stand in some connexion with the fact, that Mr. Niebuhr, after his return from Rome, appropriated his salary, as professor in the university of Bonn, to prizes to be awarded to the best treatises on subjects selected and offered by himself.]

Indulgences.

[I had visited the church *del Nome di Maria*, erected on the square of the column of Trajan in commemoration of the liberation of Vienna from the Turks in the year 1683, and had found there, on a marble slab, the following inscription:

PER CONCESSIONE DEI SOMMI PONTIFICI SISTO V. INNOCENZO XII. BENEDETTO XIV. E PIO VI. CONFERMATA DAL REGNANTE PIO VII. CHIUNQUE VISITA QUESTA CHIESA ADEMPIENDO LE ALTRE OPERE INGIUNTE, ACQUISTA TUTTE LE INDULGENZE ANNESSE ALLA VISITA DI QUALUNQUE ALTRA CHIESA DI ROMA.

(By concession of the pontiffs Sixtus V. Innocent XII. Benedict XIV. and Pius VI. confirmed by the reigning Pius VII, whoever visits this church, fulfilling at the same time the other works enjoined [in order to obtain indulgences], obtains all indulgences annexed to the visit of any other church of Rome.)

I told Mr. Niebuhr of this sweeping indulgence, comparing it to the treaties which grant terms "equal to the most favoured nations." He said:]—

You smile; yet this very expression has been used in granting religious favours to churches or societies.* It is surprising that the Roman church has obstinately clung to carrying out the idea of indulgences to so gross an extent; for,

* An altar is called privileged, when any peculiar indulgence is attached to it. When we visited the church of Santa Agnesia, the under-curate, who showed the church, told us, what in fact is well known to be matter of general belief, that as soon as a mass is read at the chief altar, a soul leaves, and needs must leave, purgatory—"*Tanto è privileggiata la nostra chiesa!*" he continued. "*Per altro se trova indulgenza plenaria per l'anima per laquale la messa è detta a questo altare,*" (pointing at an altar,) "*al giorno della festa della nostra chiesa. E se l'anima pella quale se legge la messa non sta più nel purgatorio, allora esce una altra, perchè uscire debbe una a forza della messa.*"

(Thus privileged is our church! Moreover, plenary indulgence is to be found for the soul for which mass is read at that altar there, on the day of the feast of our church. And if the soul for which the mass is intended has already left purgatory, another leaves that place, for one needs must leave by the power of the mass.)

I believe, had Rome promptly discountenanced the shocking abuse of indulgences as practised in Germany before the Reformation, the latter might have been retarded for a long time. "Don't ask too much," is a maxim of the greatest importance, as well for a poor waggoner who lives by the labour of his horse, as for a king or pope,—for missionaries, successful parties, nations, indeed for every one.

[I observed, that if a person would make a systematic tour through Rome, and obtain all the indulgences offered by paying at the fixed days at the proper altars, he might easily acquire the indulgence of a million of years.]

Undoubtedly, Mr. Niebuhr answered; but you know that these indulgences, often granted at once for several thousand years, extend to purgatory, and if you do not stand in need of the whole, you may pass the balance to the favour of whomsoever you see fit. It is these things which make so many Italians Atheists. They cannot swallow this, and therefore throw away

everything else with it. Matters stand very ill in many Catholic countries on account of these extravagances. In South America hardly any people but women go to mass. And yet a truly pious and devout heart finds its way through all the mazes to God. There are many persons who leave these matters undecided, as every man is obliged to do in numerous cases in life, when, without giving his positive and well-considered assent, he nevertheless does not feel called upon to reform. And not a few of these are among the highest clergy, the popes themselves. But this is not what I wanted to say: I mean, there are some persons who devoutly believe every jot even of these things, and whose hearts nevertheless are pure as snow.— There was an old Franciscan formerly here who used to visit us frequently; he is now bishop of Corfu.* I believe him as good and truly religious a man as I have ever known — abound-

* I believe I am right, though it may be another of the Ionian Islands.

ing with the milk of human kindness; and yet he believed in every doctrine and observance of the Roman Church, in all her intolerant mandates against us, and, I have not the slightest doubt, in all the miracles and whatever else his order believes of St. Francis. His natural religious constitution was too strong: I can imagine a saint under his serene image.—Marcus was quite little at the time I knew this old man; and the child would often take the cord of the venerable Franciscan, and pull it, as if to play horse with him. I was sometimes afraid it might embarrass him, as being in his eyes somewhat a profanation; but he always smiled with the greatest kindness upon the child.* He, I am sure, would not have wished all heretics lost for ever: nor does he probably believe they will be, or feel so; yet he may try to force it upon his mind as an article of his faith. Re-

* What a subject for a picture! equally excellent in point of art on account of the noble contrasts it offers, as for its meaning.

ligion is so ethereal a thing, that as soon as you bring it down to articles of faith, aiming at the consistency which we expect in all other matters, we are led to consequences, some of which one or other cannot make part of his positive and living belief. There are hard things in the articles of the English church, in Calvinism, in the symbolic books (of the Lutherans); but God is wiser than all, and his power reaches hearts everywhere.

[I added, that I had observed a rapid increase in the number of years of offered indulgences at the various altars, the nearer I came to Rome, until I found this abundance of indulgences in almost every chapel in Rome itself; while a poor man in Bohemia has to ascend a high hill on his knees, and obtains after all but nine years' indulgence. If it is natural, according to the whole system, that Rome abounds in indulgences, since the absolving power to which many pious pilgrims travel to have their souls unburdened resides here, a distinction ought to be

made between natives and strangers; otherwise the former have it indeed too easy: and though it may be considered expedient to attach great political privileges to the birthright of an individual, it would seem as ill-according with the whole idea of a Christian church to attach privileges of such magnitude for the state of the soul, to the mere domicile in Rome.]

Nothing can be more curious, he answered, than the details and application of some of these doctrines. It has often surprised me when I have to obtain dispensations for Prussian subjects; yet it is all but systematic consistency.

Visit to the Collegio Romano.

[Of the golden and finely-executed collar found in the sepulchre of the Emperor Otho II. and now preserved in the Collegio Romano, Mr. Niebuhr thought that it had been brought from Constantinople with the empress. Nothing seemed to please him so much in the Col-

legio as the work representing the Boy catching the Cricket.]

Mr. Capuccini, the Secretary of Cardinal Consalvi.

Capuccini (then secretary of Cardinal Consalvi, secretary of state to Pope Pius VII.) is a man of rare merit and character: he works exceedingly hard, and yet his salary is very small. The Cardinal one day in conversation with me praised him much; in this I most heartily joined; and I took occasion to allude to Capuccini's inadequate remuneration, and how he probably would be entirely forgotten on a change of the sovereign, which might so easily happen. The Cardinal said he knew it, but he never would forget the important services which his secretary had rendered him.

[Why, then, I afterwards asked, has he not yet promoted him?]

Because, replied Mr. Niebuhr, he needs him.

Perhaps he does not want him to feel independent. It is one of the severest trials of men in power to reward adequately their confidential assistants, and really working secretaries, if men of merit and talent. Few persons stand this test; and Capuccini would not be the first of his class who interfered with his own career by his own usefulness. Were he not so indispensable to Cardinal Consalvi, he would be in the enjoyment of some fine living ere this. Ministers or monarchs have often been called ungrateful for not advancing their secretaries; yet this arises frequently not from ingratitude, but from the knowledge of their great value, and also from indolence, to which we are all subject. It is an uncomfortable thing to lose one's index, writer, thinker—everything, and have all the trouble over again of making the new secretary understand you. No officer, in fact, is so difficult to be found as a secretary who suits precisely. Sometimes they are purposely kept low, that they may not aspire at independence.

Views of Antiquity.

[I had told Mr. Niebuhr that I owed to him a much more correct view of antiquity, or, I might say, feeling toward it. Until I had become acquainted with him, antiquity had been to me something totally separated from us, as if hardly the same springs of action were applicable to man in modern and in ancient times. I hardly ever had used my own feelings, joys, or griefs, as keys to understand the sentiments which inspired the ancient poets or writers. My visit to Greece had prepared me for a different conception of those times, so remote in years, and yet so near to us by the civilization we have derived from them, and by our education : but my intercourse with him had placed me, I hoped, in a more proper relation.]

There were times, Mr. Niebuhr said, when people would have considered it almost like a degradation of the ancients, had a philologer

attempted to explain their history or language by corresponding relations or phenomena of our own. The classical literature was superior to anything modern nations had at the time of the revival of the sciences; they therefore received everything coming from the ancients with a reverence which would not allow a doubt of anything, and required no reconcilement of any contradictory statements in them. But you will observe that, wherever a practical man, a statesman for instance, occupied himself with the classics, how differently he treated them from the schoolmaster. The latter treated the classics as if they were something entirely beyond the sphere of reality; and this, indeed, is still the case with many. On the other hand, there is such a thing as flippant impertinent familiarity, and such has not been very rare with the modern French before the Revolution. Its only object is to divert, from the contrast produced by a sudden comparison between the most remote objects and those of our daily and

common life. This is merely to amuse, and can amuse the little-minded only. Sometimes, indeed, it may be witty; but that is a different thing.

Influence of Teutonic Tribes upon the Italian Language.

It is a constant saying with the Italians, that the conquering nations, the Germans particularly, ruined the Latin language, and thus caused the Italian. They are much mistaken; for there is really very little Teutonic admixture in the Italian idiom. I speak of words; as to grammatical forms, they are modern. The ancient verb and substantive ceased to continue as soon as the ancient spirit had fled. Besides, numberless formations of the Italian existed among Romans, though only among the low people. To change the termination *us* and *um* into o is nothing but a negligent pronunciation;

and there are inscriptions which show that this was not restricted to the very lowest circles only; in fact, it is a very natural change in speaking quick.* So, also, the use of *habere* as auxiliary is ancient: there are some passages in Greek and Roman writers which show this.

[I replied that the use of the modern Greek ἔχω showed the same.]

Certainly, he answered; and as to the article, the many compound conjunctions, and the prepositions, you can trace all very easily. They originated during the low ages, when people had forgotten to speak with precision and manliness, and to perceive all the different relations with grammatical acuteness. Observe how many words children and low people re-

* The reader who is acquainted with Mr. Niebuhr's History of Rome will recollect the 634th note of vol. i. on page 218 & seq. in the English translation, where he gives two inscriptions, and then adds: "I have softened the rude spelling, and have even abstained from marking that the final *s* in *prognatus*, *quoius*, and the final *m* in *Taurasiam*, *Cesaunam*, *Aleriam*, *optumum*, and *omnem*, were not pronounced," &c.

quire to tell a simple story, if they are not excited by passion. Passion, to be sure, is eloquent and brief. It is for the cultivated, and yet vigorous, manly mind, to speak and write concisely.

Pronunciation of the Latin.

[On my question, which of the different ways of pronouncing Latin he thought best, he said that he had adopted the Italian pronunciation. On my farther question, why? he said:]

I have a number of reasons; but in fact the counter question, Why should we not adopt the Italian pronunciation? would be a perfectly good answer. As to the pronunciation of the c, it is clear that the Romans did not pronounce it in the German way, *Tsitsero*; this is altogether an uncouth northern sound. To pronounce it like *Sisero*, (with hard *s*,) is equally wrong: no inscription or other trace induces

us to believe that the Romans used *c* as equivalent to *s*. Besides, if we see that each nation pronounces Latin according to the pronunciation of the vernacular tongue, it is preposterous to maintain that one or the other is the correct pronunciation, except the pronunciation of the Italian itself. That the *g* was not pronounced hard as the German,* seems clear from the fact that most nations pronounce it soft. On the whole, Latin reads much better in the Italian way; and I think many passages of the poets require this pronunciation to receive their full value. People ought to agree to adopt this pronunciation; for it is too ridiculous to find the same language pronounced differently in every country, and subjected to all the caprices of the various idioms. The Spaniards sometimes claim to be, by way of tradition, in possession of the true Roman pronunciation. It is equally preposterous that they whose language is so much more mixed, and whose country was

* The German *g* is pronounced like the English in *give*.

never more than a province, should have retained a better pronunciation than the people of the mother country! Italian is still, in a degree, a Latin dialect.

Orthography.

[I asked him how he wrote a certain word; he answered the question, and then said:]

In general, I always found those who occupy themselves chiefly with orthography small minds. Orthography is sometimes not unimportant; but small people only make a business* of it, and propose the different changes.*

* I need hardly observe that Mr. Niebuhr meant to express his little regard for those only who think they are engaged in most important occupations when they propose new ways of writing, &c.; for a man like him would have considered ignorance in the orthography of a language as unfavourably as any other kind of ignorance.

The Latin word "Obscenus."

[I observed to Mr. Niebuhr how ugly the Neapolitan women seemed to me. He said:]

It is very possible, indeed, that *obscenus*, ugly, is derived from *Opscus*, *Oscus*, "like the Oscans," always an ugly race. The Romans may originally have used the word Oscan, signifying the early and uncouth inhabitants, somewhat as *villain* is used in English, meaning originally nothing but a *villager*; oras the German *Welshe* (originally *strangers*) was used for Italians, and thence for the faithless, full of tricks.*

* Verrius apud Fest. in *Oscum* derives the word *obscenus* from *Opscus* indeed, but because the *Osci* or *Opsci turpi consuetudine olim laborasse dicuntur;* but not as equivalent to *ugly, uncouth,* and hence *inauspicious,* &c.

Ferdinand IV. of Naples.

[When we read the inscription on the pedestal of the statue of King Ferdinand IV. in the Studii at Naples, which is about as follows — "Ferdinando IV. augusto, &c. religionis et securitatis publicæ Protectori invicto," &c. he shrugged his shoulders, and said:]

Well indeed! *invictus!* He was driven three times out of his capital!

St. Francis.

[We were on our way home from the cathedral of Assisi, the chief church of the Franciscans,—for in Assisi their saint was born, and on the spot where now stands that beautiful minster he experienced his first impulse to devotion,—when Mr. Niebuhr said:]

St. Francis was a great man. St. Benedict

had just laboured for the moral elevation of the higher classes. It was a necessary consequence of his system. The intention of St. Francis was to labour for the poorest and meanest. Much that now appears extravagant may not have been so in his time; much may have been exaggerated afterwards, and some points in his character may have been actually extravagant. Where is the great man that has not his monomania? Some of his miracles are invented, many may be true. I think they can be accounted for by implicit faith, which he commanded and required. That he could find, when but a young man, so many and such ardent followers, and draw up the rules of his order, so judicious for his age and his particular object, sufficiently shows that he was an extraordinary man. The *Evangelium sine glossa* is remarkable indeed, and, more than that, is great, far in advance of his age. When dialectics surrounded him everywhere, and the interpretations of the Bible were held far supe-

rior to the book itself, he penetrated all these mazes, and required the plain Gospel. He wanted no property but such as the brethren could cultivate. This, however, changed immediately after his death. At the same time rose the order of the Dominicans,—an order which received even from its very founder the stamp of persecution, and has gone on with blood and murder through the succeeding centuries. It has frequently happened, indeed, that the Franciscans protected where the Dominicans persecuted.

[I was glad to hear this opinion from his lips, and told him how much I admired the Morning Hymn of St. Francis. I was only sorry that the followers of these great men should immediately exceed the bounds of their veneration, and warp it by superstition, sometimes of repulsive grossness; for, said I, a monk, with whom I walked over the convent of St. Francis on the Capitoline Hill, spoke of his patron saint as if he were at least equal to

Christ, telling me some of the most absurd miracles. And this, I continued, reminds me of the nurse in the family of Mr. ——, (then chaplain of the Prussian legation,) who one day said: "It is a great pity the Virgin Mary is not God; it would be much better for us, poor sinners, than it is now when God is God."]

St. Francis, said Mr. Niebuhr, was, about a hundred years after his death, actually believed by many to have been the Paracletus, or Comforter. No saint was ever more universally honoured.

Mr. Pertz.

I write legibly, and not slowly, and I do not work slowly; but I know of no person who can at all be compared, with regard to rapidity of working, to Mr. Pertz.* He reads manuscripts

* Henry George Pertz, royal librarian and keeper of the archives at Hanover, made himself known in 1819 by his History of the Merovingian Major Domus. The Society

with discriminating judgment, and makes extracts more quickly than others could merely copy. This kind of rapidity is very important to those engaged at all in studies like ours; and yet it is a thing quite unconnected with the other requisites of a thorough *savant*.

Mr. Niebuhr's knowledge of French.

I have read a great deal of French, not only the firstr-ate writers, but all the second and third-rate too. I believe I write French correctly.

for Promoting the Knowledge of Early German History (*Societas pro aperiendis fontibus rerum Germanicarum medii ævi,*) sent him to Italy, where he collected most valuable materials for German history, from the year 1821 to 1823. The Society published his learned spoils in the fifth volume of its "Archives." In the years 1826 and 1829 he published two volumes folio, *Monumenta Germaniæ Historica*. His newest work is an edition of Eginhard. Mr. Pertz is at the same time editor of the Hanoverian Gazette.

Mistakes of the Cortes.

The Cortes committed several fatal blunders. They sold the commons. Many of the poor mountaineers, however, had nothing in the whole world but their share in the common; they have thus become poor to starvation, and therefore violent Royalists. In the same manner they deprived the guards of their privileges. Such a body may be disbanded; but to let it exist, and yet injure it—deprive it of old privileges, is making so many armed enemies of them.

Literary power of Paris.

The literary dictatorship of Paris over France has had some good, but also many fatal consequences. The best book published in Marseilles or Bourdeaux is hardly mentioned. *C'est publié dans la province*, is enough to consign

the book at once to oblivion. It has produced uniformity, and therefore guarded in a degree against a certain literary licentiousness; but it has also produced tyranny in a sphere where tyranny is least supportable.

Machiavelli—Segretario Fiorentino.

[We spoke of Machiavelli, and I observed how curious it was that he is so often styled *Il Segretario;* which seemed to me to agree little with the Italian custom generally followed.]*

* Though the Italians are most profuse in bestowing titles like *eccellenza,* which, in fact, any person with a whole coat may claim, they do not make much use of such titles as the above. In addressing persons, customs still exist in Italy, which other nations have long passed by. The baptismal name, with the preceding signor, is continually used instead of the family name; and the charm with which so many remember Italy, is probably owing, in part, to the peculiar feeling we have when we are all at once called by the name of our childhood, after having nearly forgotten that such is our name.

Don't you know the reason? Mr. Niebuhr replied. The censorship prohibited the "Prince" and some other works of Machiavelli; hence it was prohibited to quote him, or, in fact, to print his name by way of citation; but the substitution of *Il Segretario Fiorentino* for his name was not objected to. Thus, probably, this appellation became so common.

Italian Versions of the Bible.

Diodati's Italian Bible* is an excellent translation: some parts are most beautiful; but it is by a heretic. The approved translation occupies, with all the explanations and interpretations, such a large number of volumes, that few Italians have it: hence the reading of the Bible in the Italian tongue is virtually prohibited.

* La Sacra Bibbia, tradotta in lingua Italiana da Giovanni Diodati, di nation Luchese, 1640. Stampata a Geneva.

Liberty of the Press.

Perfect liberty of the press might be given as the highest reward to the best citizens. The state has so little to reward with. What is an order! What sensible man would give anything for such a thing! — except that the not receiving it may be a positive neglect or injury. To take absolute liberty of the press from men who are nevertheless appointed to teach youth in universities, is very inconsistent.

[I observed, that if the state should always have to decide who is worthy of enjoying the liberty of the press, it would be no great liberty after all.]

Perhaps so, he answered; but it might be somewhat like a scientific peerage, never, or not easily, to be taken away.

[The idea, undigested and impracticable as it was, not to view it from a higher point — that of right, was certainly very German;

inasmuch as the writing of books is drawn here within the sphere of political privileges, and therefore supposed to be very common throughout the nation; which, in fact, it is.]

Alexander Hamilton.

Alexander Hamilton was one of the most powerful minds of modern times. He had resources within him such as none of his contemporaries had.

Divisibility of Land.

It is the duty of governments to prevent real estates from being divided into such small portions that they become utterly useless to the cultivator. Such a law existed in the Ditmarsian republic; and the constitution of Sweden contained a provision to the same effect.

[I said that the country around Jena proved the truth of his observation perhaps more than any other country. Since then I have received a small publication—"Report to the Minister of the Interior on the Parcelling of Farms and Cutting-up of Estates in the Province of Westphalia," 1824, by Mr. Von Vincke, high-president of that province. The author of this official paper is the same Mr. Von Vincke who is mentioned in a note at the beginning as the author of a work on the Domestic Administration of England, edited by Mr. Niebuhr. The pamphlet I have just mentioned states the fact that law-suits have been brought into the courts on the Rhine for half a square foot of land. Its object is, to answer the three questions proposed by the minister of the interior, to whom the Report is directed:—

1. What is to be adopted as the minimum of a farm?*

* The German is *spannfaehige Bauernhof*, which means farms capable of keeping a team, and doing consequently the services enjoined upon these farms.

2. What laws are requisite with reference to inheritance, forced sales, &c. ?

3. Is a limitation of mortgaging estates and indebting them advisable, or how may it be prevented by general measures?

The work, though but a pamphlet of fifty-two pages, is of great interest, in a variety of respects, to the political economist; and it has been mentioned here so fully with a view to direct attention to it, as it might otherwise be easily overlooked.]

Last Wills made in Foreign Countries.

A Prussian has to make his last will in Rome, according to Roman laws. The Prussian minister has not the power of an attorney* for these cases. He ought to have it; for this

* *Justiz commissarius*, (commissary of justice,) an officer peculiar to the Prussian hierarchy of justice, though, on the whole, corresponding to our counsellors and attorneys at law.

want of proper power may expose the heirs of a Prussian subject to very great inconvenience.

Truly great things.

Everything truly great, where mind acts upon mind, proceeds from the individual; tyranny or grossness acts by masses.

Carnot.

Carnot invented new tactics, and showed how to fight and conquer with them. While he was engaged in making the giant-plans for the five armies, he wrote a mathematical work of the highest character, and composed at the same time some very agreeable little poems. He was a mighty genius indeed!

Valez.

Valez is perhaps one of the best men that appeared in the Spanish revolution.

General Vaudoncourt.

Guillaume de Vaudoncourt* is one of the best informed officers that ever have written.

* General de Vaudoncourt was born in Vienna, Austria, of French parents, in 1772; educated in Berlin; and went in 1786 to France. He entered the French army in 1791, and gradually rose to the grade of general. He served with great distinction in various campaigns of Napoleon, who made use of his talents also in political affairs. His missions were various. Wherever he was sent by the emperor, he behaved so honourably, (and abstained so entirely from obtaining riches,) that he was well received in Germany when he had to leave France after the restoration of the Bourbons. He has written numerous works, some of which appeared first in London. The one alluded to by Mr. Niebuhr is, "Histoire des Campagnes d'Annibal en Italie," 3 vols. 4to, with an atlas, Milan, 1812.

I esteem his work on Hannibal's Campaigns very highly. His inquiries into the precise route which Hannibal took are masterly.

Klopstock.

[Our conversation had turned upon Klopstock, whom Mr. Niebuhr had seen very frequently when in Hamburgh: in fact, he spent a great part of the day, at least three times a week for three months, with that poet. I collected the following by my various questions:]

Klopstock used to like me; he called me *thou.** When a young man of twenty-six, he visited Switzerland, after having published the first cantos of his Messiah:—his journey was a real triumphal march. Old and young, men, women, and children, met him. Klopstock did not like to speak of his Messiah; he was not

* The pronoun *thou* is used in Germany still more frequently than in France, as a mark of intimacy or affection.

satisfied with the poem. His religious views had also undergone some change. He was usually content with a general impression of a subject; he did not care much for entering into details. His knowledge of Latin was not deep; I assisted him in his grammatical inquiries with respect to this language. He was indolent, in spite of his love of skating, and slovenly. You know, of course, the fact, that some people censured his skating as unbecoming the bard of the Messiah. He was always in good health.

Horace.

However, Mr. Niebuhr said to me, when I had once asked his opinion of Horace, and frankly expressed my not relishing him so much as most people seemed or pretended to do;—However, Horace was a great man* after all.

* Mr. Niebuhr spoke German, in which the expression *great man* is used to signify much more than in English.

In his *sermones* you will find the deep and intense grief he felt for the state of the times, though externally he contrived to smile at it; yet it is a bitter smile. Except his odes, Horace ought never to be read in schools, for it requires extensive experience in real life to understand him.

In the United States particularly, this high epithet signifies very frequently nothing more than *highly-gifted, a man of rare talents.* I have no doubt, therefore, that Mr. Niebuhr used this expression by way of conversational extravagance; for he cannot be called great, who, in a time like his, only sees the misery. A man may have a great mind, a great soul; but a *great man* must act, and in a way that influences posterity, creating something new. In this sense was Dante not only a great poet, but a great man. This brief disquisition reminds me of a saying of Schiller, which I may not have another equally convenient opportunity to relate, and which the reader will hear with pleasure. The late Professor Pfaff, in Halle, told me that Schiller, conversing with him on Herder and Goëthe, said, "Herder is a siren; Goëthe is a great man." That Schiller meant here a Platonic siren, making the music of the spheres, and not the decoying Homeric sirens, seems clear.

Ignatius Potocki.

Ignatius Potocki* is one of the finest characters, perhaps the finest of all, in the unhappy history of Poland: one can dwell with real pleasure on him.

The Remains of Scipio.

When in 1780, under Pius VI.—an age which has been called the modern Augustan age,—the sepulchres of the Scipios were discovered, learned Vandalism dragged forth the sarcophagi,—for it was the custom of the Scipios to inter their dead,—took out the remains, and would have thrown them on the field, when, in charity, they were bought and taken to Padua, where they are buried.

* Count Ignatius Potocki, cousin to Count Anthony Potocki, was the very counterpart to the latter, who betrayed his country to Russia. Ignatius was one of those Poles who drew up the ever memorable constitution of May 3rd, 1791. He was born in 1751.

Shakspeare early transplanted to Germany.

Those who lately revived German literature —I mean Klopstock and the contributors to the Bremen *Wochenblatt*—were at first unacquainted with Shakspeare; I mean, they had not properly studied the great poet, and were not then influenced by him. But a strolling company in the north of Germany performed some of his pieces, for instance Hamlet, soon after the Thirty Years' War. How much these pieces were mutilated and tortured is another question; perhaps they were not much more changed than they are at present on the English stage.*

* A gentleman who has filled the highest station in the United States, and resided in the early part of this century in an official capacity in Berlin, said once to the writer, that the only place where he had seen the genuine Shakspeare had been at Berlin; alluding to the uncurtailed and unchanged state in which the dramas of that poet were performed in the Prussian capital.

Anticipating Pardons.

When the Ionian Islands were under the power of Venice, pardons could be obtained from the governor for crimes not yet committed. Of course, a high price was asked. The same, I think, was done sometimes in the Grisons. It was in theory not worse than the anticipating indulgences, which were sold in Germany, to the scandal of every man who had the slightest feeling of morality.

Servitude never existed in Asia.

Serfs, or bondsmen attached to the soil,* were unknown in Asia even in the early periods; but the Hellenic tribes had this institution. The

* The German word is Leibeigner (whose body is owned). Perhaps I ought to have translated it by *villain*, but this again has a distinct English meaning.

modern Greeks were never bondsmen, properly speaking; nay, the Turks have perhaps abolished the institution in Moldavia and Wallachia.

Protestants in Turkey.

Innumerable Protestants fled from Austria, previous to the reign of Joseph II, into Turkey, and founded large villages.

Tolerance of the Mufti.

The last Mufti but one was ordered to sign the permission of all Musselmen to slaughter the Greeks. He proved from the Koran that he could not do it, and was banished to Rhodes.

Turkish Faithfulness.

When Frederick II. sought at all costs to induce the Turks to make war against the Russians, he was answered, "Canst thou make twenty-five years of twenty?" An armistice existed between Russia and Turkey, which had still five years to run.

Herodotus.

It is impossible to find a more truth-loving man than Herodotus, and yet he has reported several things which are not true.

The Emperors Maximilian and Ferdinand.—Gustavus Adolphus.—Lutherans and Calvinists.

You cannot call Maximilian neutral; he was more than neutral. He wished the chalice to

be given to the laymen, and tried to induce the pope to allow priests to marry: the greater part of his counsellors were Protestants. This is, indeed, more than merely neutral. But Ferdinand was dark, bigoted, cruel, and zealous. At his court in Graetz nothing but Spanish was spoken. In this respect, too, Germany would have gained much had Gustavus lived to ascend the imperial throne. Gustavus had an essentially German education. He spoke and wrote German freely; Ferdinand did not. Gustavus, from a Teutonic tribe, with his education, his feelings and dispositions, was more a German than Ferdinand, who was a Spaniard in feeling. Had Gustavus ascended the German throne, he would soon have been considered a German by the whole country, disposed as it was for the Reformation. But he fell; the Lutherans and Calvinists abandoned each other; and after Luther there was no great man among the Protestants. As it always has been in Germany, no plan-maker was to be found, or, which

amounts to the same thing, every one was a plan-maker.

Peasant War.

It cannot be denied that the peasants in the Peasant War (of Germany) had originally the right on their side, but it could lead to nothing.

Wealth in Germany before the Thirty Years' War.

Nowhere in Germany has the wealth returned which existed before the Thirty Years' War. The change is almost incredible. But the situation of the peasant is now much better than at that period. Wherever the free imperial cities ruled, the peasant was shockingly tyrannized over.

Proportion of the Dead in War.

The proportion of the dead to the wounded was, in the Seven Years' War, as one to three; in the campaign of 1813 as one to five. There is more manœuvring now than formerly.

Irrigation and Cultivation of the Campagna Romana.

If the Roman Campagna could be irrigated as in ancient times, the country would be found fertile, as all Italian land is which is watered. At present, it is uncultivated, and produces nothing but malaria. Near Tivoli, for example, there is water enough. The labour of the men who come from Ancona would be too dear; and there are none here, on account of the malaria and fever. The ditches and sluices might be made, and then the land be let on hereditary

leases. The farmers might derive great advantage over and above the rent; and health, too, would be restored to the Campagna.

Introduction of the Musket into European Armies.

Lances, pikes, battle-clubs, &c. were yet quite in use in the beginning of the war of the Spanish succession, much more than the musket. But the early periods of the war were so murderous that the troops on both sides soon came to consist of young men. Perhaps they did not understand handling the lances and pikes, and this accelerated the adoption of gunpowder; for these weapons require more practice than the musket. How much were the Roman soldiers drilled compared to ours!

Parliamentary Regulations of the Spanish Cortes.

The *regulations* of the Spanish Cortes deserve the greatest credit, while those of the French Chamber are bad. These parliamentary regulations are of the greatest importance, and very difficult to be drawn up where a deliberative assembly all at once springs into existence, and has not grown up gradually as the British parliament. The speaker of the Cortes has to sum up the arguments on both sides: [which seems to be the most inconsistent and useless provision imaginable, much as the want of the judge's summing up to the jury in the courts of the southern states in the Union is to be regretted.]

Spanish Character.

The Spanish have always shown this peculiarity, that, taken singly, there are many noble, nay, great men, among them, but they do not know how to act together. Generals Grollmann, Lützow, and Dohna, who served among them against the French, say they are very poor in open battle; one never trusts the other. They used to say, "We are willing enough to fight, but our neighbouring regiment will not;" and thus they fled, but returned the next day. Yet none endure more or fight better in dispersed bands. Under English officers, to whom they granted perhaps that confidence which they did not feel in one another, they fought better. It was the same when they fought against the Romans; in bands alone did they fight well. Under Carthaginian officers they made good soldiers.

Their jurists are without system.

As to their manners and morals, especially in Madrid, many of my friends who know them well by personal observation have said, "Read Gil Blas; the Spaniards are the same still."

Sculpture in Rome.

About the year 1300, there were but a few statues above the ground in Rome; — the Neptune in the Capitol, Marcus Aurelius, the two Gladiators, and a few others. Everything else above the surface of the earth had been burnt for lime. It is very fortunate that Rome was so depopulated, or it would have shared the fate of Bologna. An old writer says of one of the walls of the Lateran, that it was built of statues. Imagine, then, what immense treasures of the fine arts the ancients must have brought together in Rome; for nearly all we see and admire has been dug out of the ground, and is but the gleaning. It surpasses all our conception.

There existed in the middle ages a little guide-book for pilgrims who went to Rome, in which the few statues then to be seen are explained in the most *naïve* way. Many antiques represented saints, of course.

Cæsar.—Mirabeau.—Brutus.—Cato.

Cæsar was a mighty but unbridled character,* like Mirabeau. It is impossible to imagine Cæsar great enough. The good abandoned him; with whom could he associate, or on whom could he rest his lever except on the bad? Such a mind could not possibly be at rest, nor could he remain alone.

I have no doubt but that it would have been possible to approach Cæsar with entire confidence after he had firmly established himself.

The act of Brutus was just: there cannot be

* *Cæsar war eine unbändige Natur*, were Mr. Niebuhr's words.

a doûbt about this; for a man who does in a republic what Cæsar did, stands without the law of this republic. He had forfeited his life according to the laws of his state. It cannot be otherwise. Men who bring a new time must act against the laws belonging to the past. Times would not have been so bad under Cæsar as they grew after his death.

Brutus was, undoubtedly, a pure, noble soul; but times had changed.

Cato died at the right moment; for, however things might have turned out, no sphere would have opened itself for him after the battle of Actium.

Extraction of Pope Pius VII.

[A nobleman said, probably forgetting that Mr. Niebuhr himself was not descended of a noble family, "I understand the present pope is not even a man of family." *]

* *Von Familie* were the words of the gentleman.

Oh, as for that, replied Mr. Niebuhr with a smile, I have been told that Christ himself was not a man of family; and St. Peter, if I recollect well, was but of very vulgar origin. Here in Rome we don't mind these things.

Party Spirit.

A short time ago I read in a Spanish ministerial paper, that on a certain occasion, in Spanish America, the *infamous* cry of *Viva la Patria* had been heard. Such are the extremes to which party spirit leads. A man who was not a rake, under Charles II., had no hope to be considered loyal. There is not a virtue, or anything good in the whole world, that has not, at some period or other, brought suspicion, or even ruin, on a man.

History of the Middle Ages.

A satisfactory history of the middle ages can only be founded on a thorough history of villainage.*

The Teutonic Order.

The conquest which does much honour to the Germans, perhaps the only one that does, is that of Prussia by the Teutonic Order. They injured nothing, founded cities, and the country flourished. The same cannot be said of the conquests made by the Knights of the Sword.

Croatians.

The Croatians were never serfs.

* *Leibeigenschaft.*

Hercules.

I find that Marcus is very much attracted by the story of Hercules. There runs a good-naturedness through the whole character of that hero which has great charms for a child.

Flemming.—Opitz.—Logan.—Scultetus.

Flemming, and, next to him, Opitz and Logan—how great they are! At any other time they would have created master-works which would have lasted for ever after. But their century was wanting in everything,—I mean in Germany: they could do nothing. There is a poem still extant, called "The Easter Trumpet of Triumph," by Scultetus,* who died early.

* This is, I believe, the name. I have no means at hand to verify it. The German title of the poem is, *Oesterliche Triumphposaune.*

Surely this poem, though with all the quaintness of the age, indicates a truly great genius.

Galilei.

[I said to Mr. Niebuhr, that Galilei ought to have either recanted instantly, and thus shown his utter contempt for the intolerant supporters of ignorance; or, once having denied it, ought never to have yielded.]

Mr. Niebuhr said: He was actually tortured in Rome; and no man can be answerable for what he does, driven by torture. Besides, acts of this kind are always to be viewed in different lights; and young men like you judge them very differently from what men of riper age do.

French Royalists.

I have heard the French ambassador say things here in my house which forebode nothing good, if they express the sentiments of the majority of emigrants; and I fear that they do express them, for he was long the confidential friend of Louis XVIII. They hate everything that dates from a time after the Revolution. That they must have their peculiar feelings as to this event, is natural; but they ought to forget all hatred, and, above all, give up all desire of vengeance; which many of them, I dare say, harbour in no slight degree.

Priests at the time of Aristophanes.

At the time of Aristophanes the Greek priests had actually sunk as much as the Franciscans have, for instance, at present. They were con-

temned as lazy, slothful people: they begged, too, now and then.

Difference between the Pope and his Maestro di Palazzo.

[I told Mr. Niebuhr that Signore ——, professor of mathematics in the Sapienza, had told me that Professor —— had written a compendium of astronomy, but the *Maestro di Palazzo*, a Dominican, refused the imprimatur. The author complained of it to the Pope, who ordered the imprimatur. The Dominican refused still. The Pope laid the book before the Inquisition, over which a Dominican always presides, and the Holy Office allowed the imprimatur. The *Maestro di Palazzo* refused still. The Pope then ordered another bishop to give the imprimatur, and the book at length was printed! This happened about two years before I told it to Mr. Niebuhr.]

He said: The Dominican could only dare to do so because the Pope had not given his order to grant the imprimatur *in carica*, and thus he was not infallible,—at least, he had not first heard the mass of invocation of the Holy Ghost.

[Either in this or some other manual on astronomy for the use of the students in the Sapienza, the system of Copernicus was allowed to be given only in a note, where it was said that thus Copernicus had taught.]

Contubernium.

[I asked Mr. Niebuhr whether he could give me any accurate information respecting the *contubernium*. He said he had never been able to ascertain anything entirely satisfactory to him.]

Marius and Sylla.

Marius and Sylla were not mere bloodhounds. The state of things, as so often is the case, brought them to what they did. Each of the two was in the right and in the wrong; it is always so where parties exist. It cannot be denied that they were both actuated by ideas.

The Bourbons.

The real object of the war proposed against Spain (in 1823,) is to re-establish the great Bourbon league as it had been brought about towards the end of the seventeenth century. Everything else in this affair is but subservient to this great end of the Bourbons.

Candia.

Candia was, even when under the power of Venice, almost entirely independent. There existed the strangest relation between the inhabitants and the governor.

Napoleon and Alexander.—Greece.

Napoleon and Alexander were nearly agreed as to the plan of dividing Turkey: Constantinople alone remained the difficult and unsettled question.

Convents.

Convents partly originated, and partly derived their rapid increase, from the universal feeling of misery in the first centuries of Chris-

tianity. The truly afflicting times forced the poor people into monastic retirement.

Spaniards.

An old writer says: "The Spaniards are eagles on their horses, lions in their fastnesses, women in the open field." The accounts of those who served with them against the French agree with this. Miserable in open battle, they were lions indeed in Saragossa. This trait seems to be old; the Numantians showed it.

Origin of the Carnival.

It is by no means certain when the carnival* originated,—whether it grew out of the new order of things, or is a transformation of pagan feasts. I believe the comedies of Shrove-Tuesday* are of German origin.

* *Fastnachtsspiele.*

Human Power.

It is ascertained that, towards the end of the seventeenth century, in Holland, four men had the same amount of power which five men had a century afterwards. The food had essentially changed.

Influence of the Popes.

The authority of the early popes was of great advantage to mankind. It was the concentrating and, not unfrequently, protecting power when everything relapsed into barbarism and destruction, and the dissolution of society was universal.

Ancient Roads.

The ancient Roman roads, of which so many were laid out, had elevated foot-paths on each side for passengers. They did not think alone of the horses, like our modern engineers.

United States and England.

If the United States did not form a confederation, but if their great powers were concentrated into one powerful government, a war with England would soon ensue for the supremacy of the sea. This might become the Peloponnesian war for the latter, on account of internal division, over-population, and exhaustion.

Leo the Great.

Leo the Great deserves his name. He was a truly great man, a mighty mind.

The French in Italy.

The day before the French left Rome, they demanded the silver and gold cases of the seals in the archives. The silver which has been carried out of St. Peter's alone, without any regard even to the works of Benvenuto Cellini, is immense. But a good deal may have been carried off by Italians themselves.

Births.

Italian physicians have assured me that the crime of preventing births is incredibly general

in Italy. When, under the French dominion, people found employment, population rapidly increased; but misery has brought back vice.

Ganganelli.

Pope Ganganelli was not poisoned: he died of his injudicious custom of lying in the sun, even after he had become very sickly. Remorse, too, at having abolished the Jesuits, which he did from mere compliance with the Bourbon courts, and against his conviction, did its part to undermine his health.

Attila.

Latin was spoken at the court of Attila, and it was used as the means of communication with the Italians and other nations. Attila himself understood Latin, and farces in that language

were performed at his court. Procopius has interesting passages on this point.

Adulation of Napoleon.

"*Napoleon est notre Dieu,*" said Ney to the professors of the university of Helmstaedt. You know the Archbishop of Paris called him, in a pastoral letter to his bishops, *l'homme de la droite de Dieu:* and Fabre de l'Ande, president of the tribunal, wrote to Napoleon's mother: "*La conception que vous avez eue, en portant dans votre sein le Grand Napoleon, n'a été surement qu'une inspiration divine!* But even with us, my friend, the adulation was carried by some wretches to an equal extent of shameful madness. Even now, when I relate it, it has already become incredible; and yet it is a fact. How often has it not been said, "God created Napoleon, and rested!" What is man! This happened but yesterday: how utterly vile!

Lucien Bonaparte.

I have seen Lucien Bonaparte since my residence in Rome. I have a great regard for him, and he seems to like me. He has repeatedly invited me; but you know my station does not precisely allow of an intimate intercourse with him. His monomania is his verses. He has read to me French poems of his without rhyme, having imitated, as he thought he had, the ancient metre. Imagine a poem relying, as to form, on metre only, in a language which has no prosody, and hardly any rhythm! It is a *marotte*, if ever any existed! There is, no earthly reason for ending the line, or verse, as he calls it, where he ends it; he might just as well have gone on. But, as I said, I have a great regard for him.

Celestine V.

It is far from being historically certain whether Celestine V. resigned the papal crown from conviction, or whether he was induced to do so by the family of Gaetano, whatever means they used, and for whatever considerations. I do not mean to say he had elevated himself to the conviction that, although possessed of the power to bind and loose, no mortal being was in fact endued with it; yet he may have modestly acknowledged to himself that *he* was not capable of binding and loosening man, and thus willingly yielded to Boniface VIII.

St. Peter's Church.

Spain formerly paid annually eighty thousand dollars towards the repairs of the building of St. Peter's. The same country paid a large

sum to the Lateran. Annual repairs of great expense are necessary, in order to prevent the cupola from breaking down. It has already many cracks; and as the money for repairs is wanting, they increase. An earthquake would soon change the gigantic work into ruins. There is now an iron hoop of several millions of pounds around the cupola. The real estate belonging to the *fabrica*, the revenues of which are applied to repairs only, is far from being sufficient.

Italian Language.

It is a mistake to suppose that all the barbarous words in Italian have been introduced by the Teutonic tribes. There are many of Greek, African, and other origin, from Asia Minor and various other parts of the world. They were brought by the slaves, became common among the vulgar, and when the *lingua volgare*

was elevated to the rank of a proper independent language, they too were retained.

[What Mr. Niebuhr here asserts may appear bold to some, who cannot imagine how a word brought by slaves should ever become so generally adopted. They must remember that some parts of the world furnished innumerable slaves, and that slaves of certain countries were preferred for certain trades. These, then, might easily transplant a native word of theirs to Rome, and fix it in their new country to an object familiar to their trade and occupation. However, even without this latter explanation, it is quite possible that foreign words became generally used, though imported only by slaves. The negro slaves of the southern parts of the United States and of the West Indies live without any communication among themselves comparable to that which existed among the slaves of antiquity, and yet there are some entirely foreign words in general use among them, notwithstanding their origin from so many differ-

ent countries in Africa. Thus the word *Bukra*,* for white man, is common to all slaves held by owners of the English race. Suppose these slaves did not differ in colour from ourselves; that they were the schoolmasters of our children, and filled many of the most important stations in our households and families; and that, by a similar process with that which changed the Latin language, the English idiom were supplanted by the *lingua volgare* of the slaves,—the word *Bukra* would certainly settle

* Thomas Bee, Esq. of Charleston, S.C., thinks that this curious word is not derived from an African word, but from the Spanish *Bucaro*, a kind of clay found in America. The *Dicionario de la Academia* speaks of three sorts of bucaro—white, red, and black; but Mr. Bee thinks the white or red clay of this kind is far more frequently and generally meant by the word bucaro. The Negro word *Brautus*, for cheap, is derived by the same gentleman from the Spanish *barato*, cheap. The intercourse between nations often introduces words where we should not expect them. Their general use is frequently quite surprising. The word *hammock*, in French *hamac* or *branle*, in Dutch *hangmak* and *hangmat*, of which the German *hangematte* was formed, (which was adapting it to German words, and the meaning which it now conveys coincides well with the

down in the new language, as *zio*, for instance, has done in Italian. Treating of this subject, I may be permitted to add, that the Creole language—that of the blunt, childish, helpless mind of the slave—shows numerous transformations of the original cultivated language into barbarisms, where poverty of thought and poverty of expression are equally characteristic; quite similar to the changes by which Latin was transformed into Italian. To this day, expressions may be heard among the lowest in Italy,

thing it designates,) in Spanish *hamaca*, in Italian *amaca*, or *branda americana*, &c. is derived by my distinguished friend M. Du Ponceau, of Philadelphia, from the Caribbee word *hamac*, which means a *bed*, i. e. a hammock; for they used this kind of swinging beds only, and the buccaneers carried the word to the various nations. M. Du Ponceau found the Caribbee word *hamac* in the "*Dict. Caraibe*, par le Rév. Père Raymond, Breton, Religieux de l'ordre des Frères Prêcheurs, et l'un des quatre premiers Missionaires Apostoliques en l'Isle de la Gardeloupe, &c.;" Auxerre, 1665. The same has published a Caribbee Grammar; Auxerre, 1667. Why is *gogo*, *manger à gogo*, eat as much as one likes, now used all over France, though it probably comes from the Basc word *gogoa*, will, *voluntas*, according to the same learned philologist?

which, compared with Latin, sound perfectly creole to an ear that has ever heard the poor Negro chat his childish, and, on this very account, sometimes not quite disagreeable language.]

Mr. Niebuhr's History.

Though I have had occasion to modify some of my opinions, and my residence in Rome has given me so much clearer a perception and image* of ancient Rome, yet I rejoice at having formed on the whole so correct a picture at so great a distance.

* Mr. Niebuhr's topographic knowledge of all the different periods of Rome was in fact but as he could have it. The share he has in the Description of the City of Rome by Bunsen and Platner, 1829, (of which one volume only has as yet appeared,) is known.

Courage.

[We conversed about some person whose personal courage we doubted. I observed, that I had my doubts as to the distinction between moral and physical courage; and that, though I could imagine a man of physical courage quail when moral boldness is to be shown, I doubted whether a coward could ever show great moral courage.]

You are very much mistaken, Mr. Niebuhr replied: I have no physical courage, and yet I hope I should act like a man as to moral courage. There have been many instances which prove that you are wrong.

[We probably did not quite understand each other. What Mr. Niebuhr called moral courage in a naturally timid man, may be the conviction of duty. Thus I have myself known an officer who openly confessed that he was naturally the greatest coward, but he did not

allow this feeling to show itself, and fought so well that he received an order. That I did not draw my line of distinction well, need not be mentioned; and it would be easy, I believe, to show it with much more precision, were I to give my own, not Mr. Niebuhr's opinions.]

A Capuchin.

Something curious happened lately in Naples. The confessor of the King of Naples is a Capuchin: he wished for an order, with the revenue attached to it. The king granted it; but the archbishop refused the permission to wear the sign of the order on the Capuchin dress. The pope was appealed to; he granted the dispensation to wear the common dress of ecclesiastics with the sign of the order. But a new difficulty arose on account of the beard.

Venetians.

The Venetians, in their deeply-considered politics, have never suffered feudalism among them. They had noblemen indeed, but no feudalism among these; their government, aristocratic to those who were ruled, was that of equality among the rulers.

Ignorance in Rome.

[I had been unable to buy a decent map of Italy, or any part of it, in Rome. All I had found was a map of 1763, and another of 1790 or thereabouts; and I had been told in the *stamperie camerale* that I should be unable to obtain what I wished. I could not help asking the *fattore*, whether they were not ashamed of not having even a proper map in their *alma città*. "*Che vuol che dica?*" with a shrug of the shoul-

ders, had also been the answer in this case. I told this to Mr. Niebuhr:]

Ignorance and indolence in some cases go beyond all conception. Tradition rules Rome. Even with the antiquities and ruins before their eyes, there is very little inquiry and sound active investigation here. A statue has, for some reason or other, been said to be such or such a thing for several centuries, though those who first named it had not half the knowledge we have about it; and on it goes with this name for ever. There have been excellent exceptions, but now the march is rather backward. Since the French government has been dissolved here, the anxiety of re-establishing the former state of things directs all attention to this one point, and inquiry is forgotten, or even considered as something modern, and almost objectionable.

Testa.—Rostro.

[I said, jocosely, that I should like to know whether the Latin word *testa*, a pot, rose in meaning, and came to signify in Italian the head; or whether heads sank in value and became like empty pots. *Capo*, for head, was yet common in the middle ages.]

Be that as it may, Mr. Niebuhr replied, there is a word which shows very clearly the process of transformation of modern languages out of the Latin. The Roman soldiers carried the word *rostrum*, vulgarly used by them for mouth, to Spain; as our soldiers would say, in a similar way, *snout* or *beak*: but now *rostro* means in Spanish face, and is pure Castilian.

Oracles.

Those oracles of the ancients are a strange thing. It is easy to say, it was all an artifice

of the priests; but these priests themselves were a part of the people. Besides, such explanations did well enough for the time of the French philosophers, as they were called; but we want deeper inquiries at this day. Why is it they were so long respected by the people? How does it happen that we find them in some shape or other everywhere? Did man, in those early periods, stand nearer to nature?

Early Civilization.

It seems that civilization must have started by some immediate inspiration; for whence comes it, that no tribe, though discovered centuries ago in a savage state, has advanced since then except by some impulse from foreign nations already civilized? The mythology, too, of almost every nation, whose civilization dates from remote periods, teaches that a god or goddess descended to instruct man in agricul-

ture, the use of iron, and other elementary arts. I hardly can conceive how man could have invented by himself the complicated process of baking bread, at so early a period as that in which we find him already provided with this indispensable article.*

[The following is a translation of a short essay on the allegory in the first canto of Dante, written by Mr. Niebuhr during his perusal of that great poet, and intended, if I remember right, for one of the learned societies of Rome, or actually read there. Certain it is that I copied it (with his permission) from the original, in Italian, which I found in the copy of Dante he had lent me. It will be an acceptable

* These last observations of my revered friend and guide give occasion to repeat what I said in the Introduction, that I have not been so presumptuous as to assume the right of stating or omitting what fell from him, according to my own assent or dissent; nor that I could add to the value of his views by stating my own opinions.

gift to all those friends of the great scholar who are acquainted with Dante.]

It is generally believed by all the commentators of Dante, that in the allegory with which his divine poem begins, the wood (*la selva*) in which the poet wanders about during night, ought to be explained by the state of the human soul, enveloped in vices and passions; the hill (*il colle*) surrounded by the beams of the sun, as the allegory for virtue; and the wild beasts (*le fere*) which assail him in ascending the mountain, by the vices of carnal appetite, pride and avarice. This interpretation seems to me absolutely erroneous, and incapable of being made to agree with the sense of many passages.

Let those who propose this interpretation as a matter quite certain, explain to us how the poet could say, "the great dog of Scala" would kill Avarice; and how, after the poet has left the wood, which they believe to be the image of the realm of passions and vices, he was attacked at that spot by some of these vicious

passions? How, finally, the gay apparition of one of these vicious inclinations was able to fortify his hope, giving it strength to arrive at virtue?

If there were a tradition preserved as to the interpretation of Dante, we should undoubtedly feel obliged to submit to its authority; but after the more modern commentators have proved that the ancients have strangely mistaken the sense of various passages, it may be permitted to attempt a new and more simple interpretation.

It seems to me that Dante must have spoken, not of what is common to human fate, as the state of sinfulness and the effort to elevate himself to virtue would be; nor that he would have strayed so far from the dogmas of his religion, as he would have done, in supposing that man enters and leaves the state of sinfulness during life; but, on the contrary, that everything must be explained by his life, and the peculiarities connected therewith.

It appears to me extremely simple to inter-

pret the whole allegory in the following way: Dante confesses himself to have been, after his youth had passed away, in a state of misery, when *la diritta via era smarrita*, and he found himself enveloped in the darkness of night;—which signifies that, assailed by passions, he had lost that control over himself, and that power to guide himself, according to the dictates of true reason and the eternal laws, without which man is deprived of his perfect free-will—a condition into which the soul is thrown insensibly and by surprise, as he who is "full of sleep" *(pien di sonno)* is led into such an unknown place. Yet this state of the mind is not so constant as not to allow of wakeful moments, during which we behold before our eyes the light of truth and wisdom. That this truth is not only the mundane wisdom, but the wisdom enlightened by Revelation, seems to me expressed by the hill surrounded by the rays of the sun. It unveils itself to Dante, and shows the path towards the summit; but the wild beasts meet him as impe-

diments on his way. I do not believe that Dante meant to indicate by these wild beasts anything but the obstacles which induced him to give up the farther ascent to the top of the hill. Perhaps they are individuals, and particular enemies of the poet; perhaps they are personifications, which I am unable sufficiently to explain: yet this does not show that my view is untenable. As to the wolf, *(carca di brame,)* it seems to be evident that it signifies the party of the Guelphs, or that of the Roman church—the wolf being besides the proper image of Rome, on account of its origin; that the many animals with which it unites itself *(molti son gli animali, a cui s'ammoglia)* signify the many diversified elements of which, at various times, the party of the Guelphs was composed; and that the priest should be conquered by the head of the Ghibellines, following in this the common way of poetic prophecies. *Non salirai tu alla cima*, says Virgil, *per questa strada:* that is to say, it is impossible to arrive at wis-

dom, travelling through the world as thou hast done so far; it is necessary that thou shouldst abandon it, and that, by the contemplation of human life, its faults and vices, for which the guidance of a sage illumined only by the natural light is sufficient, thou prepare thyself to be led to the knowledge of the supernatural things in the government of God, which cannot be obtained by the study of pagan authors.

In this way, it appears to me, the intricate knot of this allegory is untied without any violence.

THE END.

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